THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

THE GREAT PIONEER FAMILY PAPER OF AMERICA.

Vol. 76. PUBLISHED WEEKLY, AT No. 726 SANSOM ST. Philadelphia, Saturday, October 17, 1896. FIVE CENTS A COPY. $2.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE. No. 16

OCTOBER.

BY I. P. D.

October, October, the story is olden,
So many have sung of thy sunlight golden—
Of thine unrivaled skies, blue, glowing and clear,
That mark thee the loveliest month in the year.

Thou art with us to-day, and we greet thee with joy,
For thy sweets are not such as will easily cloy
And the tints that are flaming on hill and on vale
Grow deeper and brighter as vernal charms pale.

With russet and gold thou hast painted the leaf—
In the fields thy sun-rays are gilding each sheaf,
And the cotton fleece hanging from wide-open bolls
Are snow fields when Night her dark curtain unrolls.

There's the laugh of the brook as it sings on its way,
And the cool, bracing breeze in his merriest play,
Caressing the goldenrod, roses and all
The gay floral beauties that come in the fall.

There's the glint of a sunbeam asiant on the leaves,
That are wet with the tears of the night as it grieves—
Grieves softly—unceasingly, the long hours through,
And I know, O, Summer, those tears are for you!

MARRED BY FATE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "GLORY'S LOVERS," "AN ARCH IMPOSTOR," "HUSHED UP!" "A LOVER FROM OVER THE SEA," ETC."

CHAPTER V.—(CONTINUED.)

He smiled, gravely.

"Then don't," he said. "It doesn't in the least matter. I am quite grateful to you for helping me to spend it; I certainly couldn't have spent it on myself. The money is well laid out if the things give pleasure to you."

"Why, who wouldn't be pleased with such an endless array of beautiful things?" She laughed.

"I should like you to see Janet gloating over them! She couldn't be more proud and delighted if she were going to wear them herself."

With all its luxury and splendor, Jess' life was a very quiet one. But it was a perfect existence compared with that she had spent at Minerva House; and, as a matter of fact, it was just what she needed.

She had left the school, pale and saddened by the dreary life and Miss Sheddock's tyranny; and this quiet time, spent in the lap of luxury and in the fine and bracing air of Ravenhurst, was bringing the light and color of youth and happiness to her face.

She often thought of her journey down, and the young man who had been her companion and champion, and, in her wanderings about the village, she now and again looked at the Castle, and wondered whether he was staying there.

One morning, as she was standing in one of the lanes, picking flowers, with two or three children with whom she had struck up a friendship, a horseman came suddenly upon them.

He was riding hard, and came full pelt round the corner, so suddenly that Jess, rather startled, snatched at the child who was nearest to the middle of the road, and looked up wth a slight contraction of her brows.

She saw that the rider was the young man who had been so kind to her on the train. He pulled up the horse almost on its haunches, and raising his hat, murmured a few words of apology.

His eyes met Jess', a flash of recognition passed over his face, and he seemed about to greet her; but Jess turned aside to comfort one of the children who was frightened and had began to whimper, and he rode on without speaking again, followed by three or four dogs who had helped to alarm the little ones.

When the clatter of the hoofs and the yapping of the dogs had died away, Jess asked the eldest who he was.

"That was Lord Ravenhurst, miss," said the girl. "What a big, beautiful horse, wasn't it, miss? Johnnie was nearly run over, though, wasn't he? Father says Lord Ravenhurst will be sure to kill someone some day, and that nobody ought to ride so wild as he does."

So it was Lord Ravenhurst who had helped to while away the tedium of her journey, and had been so prompt to protect her from the tipsy ruffian in the train. It was only natural that she should think of him, and when she got home she told her father of her discovery. Mr. Newton frowned.

"Oh! it was Lord Ravenhurst, was it?" he said. "Then I am under a great obligation to him. Some day I may get a chance of thanking him; but it is not very probable. It is very unlikely that we shall ever meet."

He changed the subject abruptly, as if he did not wish to talk of the Castle people, and Jess remembered the warmth with which he had declared his dislike of the class to which Lord Ravenhurst belonged.

Strangely enough, this proved to be the last of the quiet and monotonous days, for that afternoon Jess received her first morning call.

She was sitting with her father in the garden when a footman came out to them with a card on a salver. Mr. Newton took it, but handed it to Jess.

"It is for you," he said. "We will be in directly," to the footman. "It is the Dean and Mrs. Burgess," he said, when the man was out of hearing.

"They are your first visitors. You remember passing them in the road the first day you came?"

"Yes," said Jess, quietly, but with a natural little tremor of excitement. "We must go in to them. Father, I hope I shan't do anything—wrong, or—commit a breach of etiquette."

"I'm not afraid of your doing that," he said, with a quiet smile. "You have only to be civil, and give them a cup of tea."

Jess put up her hands, and smoothed her softly-ruffled hair, with the familiar feminine gesture, and then they went in.

The dean was a comfortable, good-natured cleric, who was quite content to be ruled by his wife.

He was an easy-going body, fond of his glass of port, and a lover of whist, and, as long as he got these, he was quite satisfied with the plan of life.

Mrs. Burgess was a fussy, well-intentioned woman, who prided herself on her knowledge of the world—which was very small—and the way in which she managed her husband.

She was the greatest gossip in the place, and took everyone under her protection and patronage who would submit to be ruled and guided by her supernal wisdom.

When she had said to the Dean, "Dean"—she always called him Dean—"I really think it is our duty to call upon the Newtons; Mr. Newton looks a remarkably gentlemanly man, and the girl seems to be a very quiet and modest young lady; and I'm told that they are fabulously rich; I should think Mr. Newton would subscribe handsomely to the Cathedral Restoration Fund——" the Dean only smiled, and wagged his head submissively.

He always did what his wife told him; always went where she led him. In this case, his obedience was of the willing kind, for he had taken a fancy to Mr. Newton, and Jess, with her beauty and her simple girlishness, had interested and impressed him. So here they were.

Mrs. Burgess rose, and shook hands with Jess, and scanned her critically and with gracious approval.

Jess looked remarkably pretty in her afternoon dress, with a faint flush on her usually pale face, and with her lashes rather timidly sweeping her cheek. At the same time she looked refined and a lady, and Mrs. Burgess' air of patronage rather dwindled.

"We have been going to call for so long, Miss Newton," she said; "but my time is very much occupied, and the Dean, as you are no doubt aware, is an extremely busy man. I hope you like Ravenhurst; it is not a very gay place, but it is very beautiful, and very healthy. And I am not sure that gaiety is a particularly good thing."

"I don't know," said Jess, in her straight forward way. "I have never had any; I've only just left school."

"So I understand," said Mrs. Burgess. "You must be a great comfort to your father," she added, as she scanned Jess' costly afternoon dress, and wondered how much it had cost, and where it was made. "You must indeed be a great comfort to him."

"I hope so," said Jess, with a little smile, wondering why this lady talked to her as if she were a little child.

"You have a very beautiful place here," said Mrs. Burgess, pleasantly.

"Yes," said Jess.

"I hope you will be happy here," added the good lady.

"I am quite happy," said Jess. "The country is beautiful—and I love the country. I've spent all my life in London—and that is horrible."

"We must try and make you really fond of Ravenhurst," said Mrs. Burgess. "There is not much gaiety, as I said; but there is fairly good society, for a country place, and there is always something going on—a concert, a garden party, or a dance. You've not been to the Cathedral yet?"

"I have scarcely been anywhere," answered Jess. "My father has only just come here, and I am still more recent."

Mrs. Burgess nodded and smiled. She was impressed by the girl's beauty, by the musical voice, by the simple, straightforward manner.

"We must do what we can for you," she said, patronizingly, but really meaning to be kind. "You must come to the Cathedral service. The building is very much out of repair"—she was always keen on business, and scented a subscription already—"but I am sure you will admire it very much."

"Yes," said Jess.

The Dean and Mr. Newton, meanwhile were chatting pleasantly by the window; and the Dean had not mentioned a word, and did not intend doing so, unless driven by his wife, about the Restoration Fund.

"That's an extremely pretty daughter of yours, Mr. Newton," he said.

Mr. Newton inclined his head.

"I hope she will take to my wife. Mrs. Burgess is very fond of young girls. Shows her good taste." And he chuckled comfortably.

Mr. Newton inclined his head again. He was too much a man of the world to meet the Dean more than a quarter of the way. The footman brought in the tea, and, to Mrs. Burgess' surprise, Jess, young and inexperienced as she was, presided over the sacred teapot with perfect ease and serenity.

"You don't know many people yet, I suppose?" she said to Jess.

"No," replied Jess, frankly; "this is my first visit."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Burgess, as she sipped the costly tea, the like of which she had never before tasted, "you will soon have a number of friends. There are a good many houses in and about Ravenhurst. There are the De Ponsonby Brownes, of the Mount. I think you will like Mrs. De Ponsonby Brown. Some people think her rather frivolous, but great allowance has to be made for her up-bringings; she is a niece of Lord Spelican—and all know what the Spelicans are!"

"I don't," said Jess, with a smile.

Mrs. Burgess coughed discreetly.

"Then there are the Fairleighs, at the Hall. The Fairleighs are one of our oldest families. You will like them, I think. And the Rowntrees, at the Moat; they are old-fashioned people, but extremely interesting."

She ran through half a dozen other names, none of which Jess could remember.

"I am afrid there is nothing much going on just now—ah, yes! I forgot; there is the Orphan Society's dance. That takes place in about a fortnight.

"It is held at this time of the year so as not to clash with the County ball, and that it may come in the vacation. It is usually a very good dance, and I hope your father will take you. I will see that tickets are sent to you."

Jess thanked her.

"I don't know that we shall go," she said. "I don't know whether father cares for dancing or not."

Mrs. Burgess smiled.

"But you do?"

"Oh, yes!" said Jess; "I used to enjoy the dancing lessons at school. Of course, I've never been to a ball, or even to the mildest kind of party."

"My dear child!" exclaimed Mrs. Burgess. "Then we shall seem quite gay to you. This dance is a very good one; every one goes to it, and, next to the County ball, it ranks first."

"I hope father will go," said Jess.

Mrs. Burgess rose soon afterwards, and Mr. Newton offered to show them round the garden. The Dean had told him that he was fond of flowers—roses particularly.

They went round the garden, and the Dean admired the flowers, and, in his timid way, ventured to make several suggestions. These he made to Jess, who liked him better than his wife.

"I should plant a bed here, my dear Miss Newton," he said, pointing with his stick to a spot on the lawn. "Put in tea roses. Nothing but tea roses. Over there you might have hybrids."

With his stick he planned out the rosary, and Jess, with her eager eyes and fast-fleeting smile, listened attentively, and promised to follow his advice.

"Nice people, my dear," he said, as they got into the ramshackle pony carriage. "That girl is one of the most beautiful young women I've ever seen; and her father seems a most gentlemanly and sensible man."

"Yes," assented Mrs. Burgess. "She's pretty enough; but," she added, with a little sniff, "she seems to have a will of her own, and to be rather—independent. But she'll find her level, no doubt. I will

ask our friends to call upon them. Did you mention the Restoration Fund?"

"I—I am afraid I did not, my dear," he said, guiltily.

"Well, I did," said Mrs. Burgess; "and I shall expect a handsome subscription from Mr. Newton."

"And I daresay you will get it, my dear," said the Dean, soothingly. "They seem to be immensely rich, and Mr. Newton appears to be very good-natured. I should ask him."

"Of course, you'll leave it to me!" said Mrs. Dean, with another sniff.

"My dear, I leave everything to you!" retorted the Dean, with a comfortable chuckle.

The following day Mrs. De Ponsonby Brown called. She drove up in a stylish Victoria with Coe springs, and she was beautifully dressed, and in every way quite opposite to the Dean's wife.

She was a blonde, with fluffy hair, which looked as if it had received some assistance from the dyer's art; her eyes were blue, and full of a half-languid mischief, and she laughed frequently, but not unmusically.

She began to make a fuss over Jess at starting, for she was very much struck by Jess' beauty, the perfect fit of her dress, the evidence of wealth in and about the Grange.

"My dear Miss Newton!" she said, as she leant forward in the low, lounge chair, and smiled at Jess, "you and I have got to be great friends.

"My husband says that I'm like a child, and that I take sudden fancies and dislikes, and I suppose it's true. One's husband ought to know all about one, oughtn't he? At any rate, I've taken a great fancy to you—I hope you don't mind my saying so?"

"Not at all," said Jess, with a faint smile.

"And I hope you will return my spontaneous affection," continued Mrs. De Ponsonby Brown. "I really want to be great friends! It is so delightful to think that there is a girl of—well, nearly one's own age—in the place; you've no idea what a fearful lot of antique matrons and old maids there are in Ravenhurst and Burley!

"You saw the Dean and his wife yesterday? I met them as they were coming away. Well, they are about a fair specimen. Of course, there are some young people, but—but well, I don't want to make you vain, my dear, but they are not like you. Is that too plain, I wonder? Mr. Newton, do you think I shall spoil your daughter?"

And she looked up at him as he stood beside them, listening with a half grave, half amused smile on his face.

"Jess is not easily spoiled," he said, very quietly.

"Now, I do like the way you said that!" she exclaimed, letting her eyes rest upon him with dreamy satisfaction. "Most men would have made the usual foolish, commonplace response; but you said just the right thing! Well, I'll try not to spoil her; and I promise that I will never—no, never—tell her how much I admire and like her after to-day. And you will come and see me soon, my dear? Oh! I don't want you to wait until the proper time has elapsed before returning my call.

"Don't let stupid conventionalities come between the friendship which I, at any rate, have sworn! Come over to-morrow—yes, to-morrow! I shall be all alone; my husband is going to drag Frank to a political meeting at some place twenty miles off. You know that he is an ardent politician—Conservative, of course.

"He is a Ruling Councillor, or something of the kind, and addresses public meetings and tea-fights, and he wears all kinds of brass ornaments, decorations, they call them, like a general or an admiral, you know. And I have to pin them on for him. He wanted me to be a Dame—or whatever it is. You know, it is a great woman's movement——"

Mr. Newton smiled as she paused for breath.

"Yes, we know all about it, Mrs. De Ponsonby. And a very valuable league it is—to the Party to which it belongs. I ought to say that I am a Radical."

"Are you?" opening her blue eyes on him widely. "How delightful! My husband will be overjoyed, because he will have someone he can wrangle with about politics.

"You see, everybody here—who is anybody—is a Conservative. I often think it is very hard upon him; because I am quite sure all the fun of playing at politics lies in the squabbling and arguing."

"I'm afraid I'm not much good at arguing," said Mr. Newton, still smiling; "but I will do my best, or my worst."

"How good of you! You must come over and dine with us, and begin to squabble as soon as possible. I'm afraid Frank is not very enthusiastic, and rather hates politics than otherwise; but he is so good-natured that he lets Reginald drag him to meetings all over the county."

"May we ask who Frank is?" asks Mr. Newton.

"Oh! Haven't I told you? How stupid of me! He is my cousin—one of the Spelicans, you know."

"I'm afraid I don't know," said Mr. Newton.

"He is the dearest and best-natured boy in the world!" ran on Mrs. De Ponsonby. "In fact, he is the only really good Spelican I know. Of course, his name isn't Spelican—he's only a second cousin of mine—but Forde——"

Jess began to look confused, and very much as if she were going to laugh; and Mrs. De Ponsonby nodded and smiled.

"You think me awfully vague, don't you? So I am. I never can explain things, don't you know. Anyway, he is Frank Forde, and my second cousin; and he is a real good boy, and it is quite right and fitting that he should have the Forde property.

"Just now he cares for nothing but sport—fishing and shooting, you know—and what he calls improving the property, but what Reginald calls 'pauperising the people.' I hope you'll like him, Mr. Newton. I'm half inclined to suspect that Frank is a Radical, like you, only he does not like to hurt Reginald's feelings by saying so. Is that half-past five? Good gracious! and I promised to call at the Moat! Good-bye, good-bye!"

She held Jess' hand and beamed upon her with the dreamy and glowing blue eyes.

"You'll waive ceremony and etiquette, and all the rest of it, and come over to-morrow?"

"A butterfly!" remarked Mr. Newton, with his cynical smile, as the smart victoria drove away. "What do you think of her?"

"I don't know," said Jess, laughing. "She meant to be kind, father."

He nodded.

"Yes, go to-morrow by all means. I want you to make friends here. A young girl needs them—especially when she is motherless."

He walked away as he spoke, with his head drooped somewhat.

The Mount—Mr. De Ponsonby Brown's place—was about a mile from the Grange, and Jess wanted to walk there on the following afternoon; but Mr. Newton shook his head.

"Better take the carriage, Jess," he said. "Go in state on your first visit; afterwards"—he smiled—"well, it will not matter."

"I always feel like the Lord Mayor in his state coach," Jess said, laughingly.

He looked at her thoughtfully.

"You are right," he said. "Jess, you have admirable taste. Take the carriage, however, this afternoon."

Immediately after she had started, he sat down and wrote to one of the best carriage builders in Long Acre for a pony phaeton, and then went down to the stables, and, in his quiet but impressive way, requested the coachman to look out for a pair of ponies—"for your mistress; and let them be a good pair, please."

The Mount was an Elizabethan mansion, standing in grounds of no great extent, but pretty and old-fashioned.

Mrs. Ponsonby went in for Art—with a capital A—and Jess was ushered into a drawing-room decorated and furnished according to the latest art craze. It was all sky-green and sea blue, with touches of salmon-pink and sunflower-yellow.

A subdued and dreary atmosphere seemed to pervade the room, and the light was carefully shaded so that no glare was permitted to break the "harmony" of the various tints.

There was no one in the room when Jess entered, and she took a seat in a low chair near the window, which was open, but shaded by an Indian curtain, and looked round her with curious interest. The mixture of half-toned colors and the dim light amused her, and seemed strange after the glitter and splendor of the Grange drawing-room.

Presently, while she was still looking round, and trying to understand it all, a man's voice, just outside in the garden, struck up a popular song.

It was a pleasant, boyish voice, and when the note happened to be too high, he struck off into a whistle, and then took up the tune again, singing.

There was something so boyish and free-and-easy in the voice and the song, and the manner of the singing, that Jess could not help smiling, and the smile was still on her face when the delicate Indian curtain was tossed aside by a quick hand, and a young fellow stepped in.

He was a fine-looking lad, with a sunburnt face, as fair as Saxon's, with almost yellow hair clustering in curls on his well-shaped head, and blue eyes, which made the other blues in the room seem dingy.

"You here, Florrie?" he asked—demanded, rather—in a voice that matched the free and frank singing one. "Touching the tea; is it ever going to be ready? Why on earth do you keep this room darkened, like a tomb? Some of these days a fellow will tumble over one of the chairs and break his neck, and you'll be sorry—when it's too late! How do you draw this thing—or doesn't it draw at all?"

He dragged the curtain aside impatiently as he spoke, humming the air of the song he had been singing, and stepping back, touched Jess, unconsciously.

"Hullo!" he exclaimed, turning.

Then he saw her, and that she was a stranger. The colors rose to his handsome face, and he stared down at her with almost boyish confusion and shyness.

Jess was not shy, and there was something so comic in his intense surprise and embarrassment, that the smile played on her lips and danced in the gray eyes she lifted to him.

"I—I beg your pardon!" he said, with a stammer, as he clutched at the curtain, and nearly brought it down. "I—I thought Florrie—I mean my cousin, Mrs. Brown—was here. I didn't know——"

He tossed the frail curtain across the pole, and looked at Jess with the timid curiosity of a shy man. As he looked his shyness increased; for there is something awe-inspiring and fear compelling to men like Frank Forde, in such beauty as Jess'.

It seemed as if he could not take his eyes off her, and they were so frank and expressive that Jess began to feel rather confused. If he had actually exclaimed "Oh! how beautiful you are!" he could not have expressed his admiration more distinctly than his eyes were doing.

It was really an embarrassing moment of silence, and Jess—the courage on such occasions is always displayed by the woman—broke it.

"I am waiting for Mrs. Brown. My name is Newton——"

He woke, threw off the spell as it were, at the sound of her voice.

"I—I beg your pardon! Miss Newton, of the Grange? I know. How—how do you do?"

He held out a great, strong hand—forgetting that he ought only to have bowed—and Jess smiled as she put her hand into his.

"I don't know what's become of my cousin," he said. "Gone to lie down, I expect; she's given that way sometimes. I—I hope you haven't been waiting long. Hot, isn't it?"

He flung the other half of the French window open; then strode across the room, and then came back and rang the bell, with a force of a fire alarm.

"Tell your mistress——" he said. Then, as Mrs. De Ponsonby Brown came floating into the room in a delicate tea-gown, he blundered out: "I say, Florrie, where have you been? Miss Newton has been waiting——"

"I know! My dear, do forgive me!" pleaded his cousin. "I went to lie down for a few minutes, and—actually—I must have fallen asleep! How good of you to come! But I knew you would! You are of the sort that keep a promise—even though the thermometer runs up to fever heat! Frank, ring the bell again. Tea at once—at once—please! Miss Newton, let me introduce you to my cousin, Mr. Forde."

"We've shaken hands already," he said, with the shyness which looks like sullenness. "I came blundering into the room——. Why don't you let in more light?"

"Frank, my child, you are a barbarian. Do—do come away from that table! My dear, he breaks hundreds of pounds of bric-a-brac at every visit. He is so clumsy——" She broke off to cry "Frank! What are you doing?" for at the advent of the servant with the tea-things, he had made room for them by sweeping the ornaments on a round table into its cover and—not too carefully—depositing them on a couch.

"Only making room," he said. "It's all right. If it weren't for me you wouldn't have space to swing a cat in."

Then, as if overwhelmed by a wave of shyness, he subsided into a chair.

"I have been looking forward to your visit so much," murmured Mrs. Brown. "Frank, Miss Newton's cup!"

He started to his feet, nearly upsetting the table which his cousin clutched just in time, and took the cup, with its accompaniments of cream and milk and sugar, to Jess.

"We really might have had it outside on the lawn——"

"There would have been more room to move about," Frank Forde put in, under his breath.

"But we will go out afterwards. I am so sorry my husband isn't at home; he is at a stupid committee meeting. Why aren't you there, Frank—I thought you were going?"

"So I was," he said, "but I struck at the last moment. I got into disgrace at the last affair by going to sleep in the middle of the proceedings, and—and snoring."

He said it so simply and gravely that Jess laughed; and he looked at her half gravely for a moment, then laughed an echo.

This broke the ice, and Mrs. Brown chattered on with unbroken vivacity, the other two listening, and Frank watching the face of her visitor as if it were something magical in its beauty.

"No more tea, dear? Then let us go outside. Frank, you've torn that curtain!"

"I know; I'm glad!" he said, with all a shy man's abruptness. "It's always in the way!"

"You'll buy another, if you please!" she retorted. "I make him replace all the things he breaks and tears, my dear; it's the only way of teaching him not to be such—such an elephant."

They went out on to the lawn, to two lounge seats under an ash, which afforded almost the shelter of an umbrella; and Mrs. Brown, leaning back, with a little sigh of anticipatory enjoyment murmured—

"Now for a nice long chat."

She started off; told Jess the history of the Purgesses, the Rowntrees, the Fairleighs, and all the other families in the neighborhood.

And Jess, as she listened, not very attentively, watched, absently, the young fellow wandering about the lawn with a cigarette in his mouth and his hands in his pockets.

Presently he flung his cigarette away and came and sat on the grass beside them, his cap on the back of his head, showing his short golden curls, his big hands clasped round his knees.

"But you will see all the people at the ball, on the twentieth. Of course, you will go?" flowed on Mrs. Brown's rippling voice.

"Everybody goes. It's a charity ball—the Orphan Society's. Of course, there are never any profits; but the stewards—Reginald is one of them—send round the hat amongst themselves, and hand over as big a sum as they can.

"It's not a bad ball; and all the best people make a point of going. Lord Clansmere was there last year; but I don't think he will be well enough this. Lord Ravenhurst may come, if he should happen to be there."

"Is he not here now?" asked Jess.

"No; he has gone up to London. But I fancy he is coming down again presently. You never can tell what Lord Ravenhurst will do, or where he will be for five minutes together. He is so terribly wild! Of course, you have heard about——"

She happened to glance at Jess, and something in the innocence and purity of the gray-blue eyes checked her.

"Ah, well," she continued, "I mustn't tell tales. And perhaps it isn't true. But I hope he will be there. The Clanesmeres give such an eclat to any affair in this place."

A servant came to announce Miss Newton's carriage.

"Must you really go, dear? Well, we shall meet again soon, I hope—at the ball, at any rate. Frank, I'm sorry you can't wait over for it!"

He said nothing; but dropped his eyes from Jess' face where they had wandered, and rested, nearly the whole time he had been squatting beside them; and he rose and conducted Jess to the carriage.

She gave him her hand with a frank, girlish smile, and he held it for a moment, then dropped it awkwardly, raised his cap, shuffled with his by no means small feet; and, after staring at the back of the receding carriage for nearly five minutes, sauntered back to the lawn.

His cousin looked up with a languid smile.

"Well, what do you think of her, Frank?" she asked. "Isn't she pretty?"

He looked at her with almost savage in-

dignation and boundless scorn of the word.

"Pretty!" he echoed.

"Oh! don't you think so, really?" she exclaimed. "Why, what bad taste you have, you poor, benighted boy!"

He kicked the lawn with the toe of his boot, and stared moodily at the hole in the smooth, green turf.

"I'll go and have a dip before dinner," he said.

As he passed her a few minutes later, with his towels on his arm, he paused, and, looking at the tree above her, absently, said, in a would-be casual way—

"Florrie, if you're good, I'll stop over for that idiotic ball of yours."

CHAPTER VI.

THE night of the ball arrived, and Jess stood in the centre of the drawing-room, fully attired in all the splendor of her first ball-dress, for her father's inspection and approval.

As Janet stood beside her, with the superb opera wrap which matched the dress, and which would give a touch of the imperial to the slim, girlish figure it would enfold, there was pride in her pretty face, and it was reflected in the graver and sterner countenance of her master, as he looked at his girl.

"Shall I do, father?" Jess asked; not with vanity or self-satisfaction, but with a little wistful entreaty in her voice.

"Yes; I think you will do, my dear," he said.

And Janet, who understood the world of pride which lay hidden under the grave response, smiled demurely.

"Wait one moment," he said, as he raised the cloak; "I had almost forgotten that you would want some ornaments."

He left the room, and returned presently with some flat morocco cases, and opened them out on the table. There were sets of diamonds, pearls, and rubies, the beauty of which Jess, woman-like, could appreciate, though she was, of course, quite ignorant of their costliness.

"Father!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands as she looked down at the glittering, scintillating gems reposing on their velvet cushions.

"You like them?" he said. "Choose—it is scarcely fair to ask you to do so at the last moment, but they have only just arrived."

"May I really choose?" she exclaimed. "Oh, father, the diamonds!"

He laughed as she took them up almost fearfully and held them to the light. Then, suddenly, he saw her eyes grow grave and wander from them to the rubies, and then rest on the pearls.

"I suppose most girls would choose the diamonds, father?" she said, with a smile.

"They would," he assented, laconically. "Or the rubies."

"And—and yet—I think—father, would not the pearls be best? Am I old enough for the diamonds? They are so—so magnificent; they must be worth so large a sum of money—and people would think——" Her brows grew straight.

He nodded.

"You are always right. Wear the pearls—to-night, at any rate," he said. "Let me put them on. I hope I know how."

"If you don't, I do!" she said, with a joyous laugh. "Such knowledge is born with a woman. Oh, father, how good you are to me!" and she put her arm round his neck and pressed her soft, warm face against his hard, angular one.

He closed the cases, and took them to the safe in the library, and then they started.

The ball was going to be a crowded one, the line of carriages was longer than on any previous year. Amidst the confusion of arriving guests and departing servants, Jess, on her father's arm, ascended the plush-lined stairs to the ball-room.

It is the fashion to observe punctuality at country dances; the early birds pick up the best partners; and the Newtons, who were a little late, found the big room nearly full already.

The affair was always well done, the decorations were tasteful—Mrs. De Ponsonby Brown had a hand in them, by the way—there was an excellent military band, and the refreshment department was arranged with liberality. You were always certain of finding it unlimited.

Jess held her breath as she looked round, and her heart began to beat with a little electric throb, which never quite slowed down for the rest of the evening.

Remember that it was her first ball!

Now much has been said of Jess' prettiness, but to-night, in common fairness, it must be admitted that there was no lovelier woman in the room than Jess Newton.

She was quite un-selfconscious without spark of vanity, and rather doubtful about her dress, splendid and exquisite as it was; and she did not know that her entrance had created that peculiar little stir which newspapers are so fond of calling "sensation."

Men looked at her with that unmistakable expression which means startled admiration, and found it difficult to remove their eyes; and the women glanced at her—many of them with a pang of envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness—and looked aside again, a little too quickly.

But there was other pretty women there, and Jess was prompt to recognise the fact, and admire.

"How lovely some of the ladies are! and their dresses, father!" she whispered.

"Yes," he said, gravely; but his heart swelled with pride as he said to himself, "But none so lovely as my child!"

The stir, "sensation," soon found expression. Jess had scarcely gained a seat before she was surrounded by men anxious to secure a line on her programme which they knew would soon be filled; some were men she knew—the Fairleighs, Rowntrees, and others, who had called at the Grange recently; but there was another batch waiting to be introduced by the stewards, and Jess, in all innocence, was permitting her programme to be filled, when her father murmured:

"Not too many, Jess; you must not tire yourself!"

She had been the smartest girl in the Minerva House dancing class, and her first partner—a dancing officer from the neighboring barracks—murmured to his mustache, with astonishment—

"By Jove! moves almost as well as she looks!"

It was almost audible; but Jess did not hear. The electric throb was still beating in her heart; her young senses were swimming in the flood of light, and music, and exquisite colors; and her eyes were glowing with the joy of this—her first, her very first ball!

Almost in a dream, almost unconscious of her partners, she got through three or four dances, without noticing anyone; then suddenly she saw a head, with short, fair curls, coming near her, and Frank Forde stood before her.

"Am I too late, Miss Newton?" he asked, his eyes raised eagerly to hers for a moment, then cast down, a boyish blush on his face.

Jess gave him her programme.

"Oh, but I forgot!" she said. "I promised my father I would not dance too many."

"Give me one, then, only one!" he pleaded, forgetting his shyness in his eagerness and anxiety. "I—I'm not much of a dancer, but——"

"One, then," she said. "And if my father scolds me——. Oh, here is my partner for the next." And she was whirled away from him.

He stood and watched her. She was the belle of the dance. If there had been any doubt of the fact in his own mind, the chatter of the dowagers and chaperons near whom he stood would have dispelled it. They were all talking of her.

"A singular type of beauty," said one. "She looks half Italian, half Irish. She is pretty."

"Pretty!" The same scorn that had swept over his soul when his cousin had applied the word to Jess' loveliness, swept over it now.

"It is the gray eyes and the dark hair," suggested one, grudgingly.

"No, it is the clear oval of the face, and the expression," said another. "It is just the face which men rave about."

"And they say that her father is worth millions!" murmured an old woman in a yellow turban; and she sighed, for she had four plain daughters, whose father, alas! was not worth even hundreds.

"My dear, I congratulate you!" said Mrs. De Ponsonby Brown as Jess, panting a little, stood, during the wait, near her father.

She turned her glowing eyes upon Mrs. Brown's smiling ones.

"Congratulate me? Why? Oh, because I am enjoying it so! Oh, yes, yes! I am, I am! It is delightful, lovely! My feet won't keep still, even when I am not dancing! The music is heavenly! Ah, you never heard the tin-kettle piano at Minerva House!" and she laughed.

Mrs. Brown nodded and laughed, too.

"It is a great success; but it only wants one thing!" she said.

"What is that? Why, I thought it was perfect!"

"None of the Clansmeres are here," said Mrs. Brown. "It was thought that Lord Ravenhurst might come down. Why, here he is, after all! Now we are all right! Isn't he—splendid!" she added, in a low voice.

Jess looked in the direction of the door, and saw the tall form she remembered so well.

It looked taller than even she recalled it, in evening dress; and the handsome face appeared singularly cool and self-possessed, serene and indolent, with the now heated and flushed ones of the other men.

A little group gathered round to welcome him; women smiled, dowagers nodded their feather decked heads and grinned graciously; some of the girls glanced covertly at their programmes, and then at the great man wistfully.

He came up the room, talking to one and the other, with the pleasant, almost lazy, smile on his face, asked Lady Fairleigh for the next dance, and then Jess lost sight of him.

She had forgotten him, quite a few minutes later, as she floated round with her first partner, and it was with a start that she heard Lord Ravenhurst's voice, saying—

"Will you please introduce me?"

The steward mumbled her name—and Jess looked up, surprised to find that it was she to whom Lord Ravenhurst wished to be made known.

"Will you give me the honor of a dance—if you have one left, Miss ——" He hesitated. It was evident that he had not caught her name. "I am afraid that I am too late! Oh, there is one! I am glad!"

He stood for a moment, then went for his next dance. When his turn came he was by her side in good time.

"I am so glad to meet you here!" he said, as he put his arm round her. "I wanted to apologise for nearly running over you, the other day. I hope I am forgiven?"

"Quite," said Jess. He danced perfectly; but was it only the perfection of the easy, gliding, graceful step which so suddenly had drowned the delight of this never-to-be-forgotten evening? Why was she glad to see him, to hear his voice, again? she asked herself.

"I wanted to ask you how you like Ravenhurst?" he said, after a moment or two.

"Very much!" she replied.

"Really!" he said. "Ravenhurst scores there! Are you still staying here—I mean, you are going to stay, I hope!"

She looked at him wonderingly. He did not know, then, who she was! She was! She had half-doubted that he could be ignorant,

She smiled.

"Yes, I am going to stay," she said, demurely.

"By Jove! what a pleasant journey that was!" he remarked, after another pause.

"And yet, I should have thought," she hesitated, "that—that you had had a great deal of trouble——"

"You mean the affair with the farmer fellow!" He laughed. "Poor chap! not that he got more than he deserved. It is hot, and yet you look so cool! There is a bigger crowd than ever to-night. Are you enjoying it?" he added, looking at her with interest, curiosity—and admiration which had been increasing every moment.

"Oh, yes," she said. "This is my first ball, and it is——" She paused for a word. He nodded and smiled.

"I know! Look out!" He steered her out of the way of a boisterous couple just bearing down upon them. "I'm not surprised!"

"Why?" she asked, innocently.

He looked at her curiously, as if he doubted whether she could be so unconscious.

"Oh, well, you dance as if you enjoyed it. Now, will you let me give you an ice—something? For Heaven's sake, don't say 'No,' for I am dying for a glass of champagne!"

She laughed, and he drew her arm within his and led her into the refreshment room, got her an ice and a champagne cup for himself; the waiters hovering about him obsequiously.

"How strange to meet you here!" he said, looking at her, with the admiration and interest deepened in his eyes, eloquent in his smile.

"I suppose you don't know all the people? I don't myself; so many strangers come from afar, you know. I'm looking for someone." He paused, as if he were sorry he had spoken, and Jess did not understand his hesitation, and inquired—

"Who is it?"

"A lady," he said. "I don't know her by sight, and I've got to guess her; but I don't think I shall have much difficulty."

"Why?" she asked. How tall, how straight he was! There was no other man in the room who looked exactly as he did; what was it?

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Bric-a-Brac.

THE GREYHOUND.—The Italian greyhound is stated to have been brought to England in the reign of Charles I., that monarch having had a great admiration for the dog, which consequently became very fashionable.

SIGNS AND NUMBERS.—In the London and Paris of a century ago numbered houses did not exist. The coat-of arms, the house-name, or the sign board were the only indications to guide our ancestors' wandering feet by day or night. Berlin began to number houses in 1795. Starting from the Brandenburg gate, the Prussian edile counted straight on to infinity, neither beginning afresh with fresh streets nor numbering the houses by odds and evens. Vienna adopted the latter reform in 1803; and Paris followed in 1805.

PAUPERISM IN HOLLAND.—There are no great poorhouses and few ablebodied paupers in Holland. There is a tract of public land containing five thousand acres. It is divided into six model farms, and to one of these is sent the poor person applying for public relief. If he voluntarily serves till he learns agriculture, he is allowed to rent a small farm for himself, and be what is called a free farmer. Every pauper who is thus reclaimed to honest regular industry is so much gain to the State. There is also a forced labor colony, where beggars and vagrants are sent and made to do farm and other work, whether they like it or not.

THE ALPHABET.—Besides being an Archer and an Apple-pie, A enjoys the even greater dignity of being the first letter in almost every alphabet throughout the world, living and dead. It takes a "back seat" in some African tongues, and amongst some very ancient peoples who wrote by signs it is not easy to say where the letter comes in. But it is nearly wholly true that A is the head and front of the alphabets of civilized races. It owes this proud position to the fact that it is the simplest as it is the fullest and strongest of sounds; for so easily can it be produced that the child has but to open its mouth and breathe, and out will come one or other of the A sounds.

THE HONEY GUIDE.—In some parts of South Africa there is a little brown bird whose mission is to lead the wayfarer to a nest of bees. Hence he is called the honey guide, although Sir John Kirk declares that it is the young bees, and not the honey, which he looks for as his reward. It seems certain, however, that he does not object to plunge his bill into the comb. Anyhow, the bird's first object is to attract the traveler's attention by ceaseless chirping and chattering. If no heed is paid to him he shows his anger at the neglect by uttering excited cries; but if he is followed he will sooner or later lead the follower to where honey is. It is on record that he has even conveyed, by a very roundabout road, the owner of some beehives to his own hives. And that is the only fault that is found with his guidance. He doesn't know—how could he?—a kept hive from a wild bee's nest. The natives accuse him of decoying people to the lair of the leopard or the snuggery of the snake. But the charge is false.

THE WEDDING-CAKE.—The wedding-cake of to-day is the evolution of simplicity, its present form in England only dating from the time of the Restoration. In ancient Rome when a maiden was married she always carried three ears of wheat in her hand, whilst over her head was broken a plain cake made of flour and water, as a presage of plenty and an abundance of good things in her married life. The Early English bride wore a wreath of wheaten ears which were sometimes gilded, and on her return from church, corn was thrown over her head which was afterwards gathered up and eaten by the guests—the genesis of the present day rice-throwing. As the centuries passed, however, this grain was made into large thin biscuits, which were broken over the bride's head and then distributed amongst the assembled company. These cakes in the time of Elizabeth became little rectangular buns made of flour, sugar, eggs, milk, spice and currants. They were usually piled high on a plate, and it was the custom of the bride and bridegroom to kiss one another across them. This mass of cakes covered with comfits and almond paste, and stacked in a pyramid, soon led the way to one huge cake, for which, however, we are really indebted to the exiles who had acquired a taste for French cookery during the Commonwealth, and whose cooks on their return converted the wedding-bun into the wedding cake of much the same form as we know it to-day.

THIS DAY.

BY W. W. LONG.

Over yonder on the headland of the calm and placid bay,
Falls the cooling shades of evening on the fair and perfect day;
And the gold and purple twilight of this day that is so sweet,
In a wave of royal splendor throws its glory at my feet.

Soft and slow the light is dying in the hush of vesper prayer,
Soon a memory pure and holy will but be this day so fair.
How my soul in loves elysian revels in a rapturous bliss;
How the blood within my body thrills with fire at your warm kiss.

Shadow follows shadow down the dusky way of night,
Yet love's star sheds forth a radiance making all things bright;
Love and memory are the rulers of this perfect day,
That lies dead now in its beauty on the waters of the bay.

OUT OF THE NIGHT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FROM GLOOM TO SUNLIGHT," "LORD LYNNE'S CHOICE," "HER MOTHER'S SIN," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER LXXIV.—(CONTINUED.)

"HE may do as he likes then," she said; "I shall be Earle's wife. My fortune will be settled on me, and I shall defy him; if he tells his story then, he will not find many to believe him; Earle will not believe anything against his wife, I am sure.

"I must bribe some respectable family to say that I lived with them as governess in Florence. I shall conquer the difficulty when I am once married to Earle."

That was her one haven of refuge, her rock, her safe harbor from all storms; the end which she so ardently desired to gain; the one great object in life that she proposed for herself; it seemed to her all must be right then.

She had written to Mattie, asking her to come to Linleigh on the first of August: but so desirous was she of keeping her secret, that she had not told her what for, and she did not tell her until they were driving in the pretty pony carriage back to the court; then she was so eager to tell her story, that she did not notice how pale the brown face had grown, or how the dark eyes looked full of unshed tears.

"So you have sent for me, Doris, to be your bridesmaid," said Mattie; "you, who might have some of the noblest and highest ladies in the land?"

"There would be none that I love like you, Mattie. We were sisters for years, you know."

Then Mattie was silent for a little time. She said to herself at first, that if she had known why Doris wanted her, she would not have gone, she would rather have done anything, have suffered anything, than seen Earle married. Then she reproached herself for being selfish, and tried to throw all her heart and soul into her sister's plans.

Lady Doris wondered why Mattie suddenly kissed her face and said:

"Heaven bless you, my darling; I hope you will be very happy. I should think, Doris, that you are the happiest girl in all the world."

"Yes," said Doris, "I think I am;" and she added to herself, bitterly, "Would to Heaven I were!"

The countess was more than kind to Mattie; in her own mind she was always thinking how to pay back to Mark Bruce's daughter the kindness they had shown to Doris.

When the two young girls stood together in Lady Doris' dressing room, she drew off her driving gloves and laid them on the table; then for the first time Mattie saw the terrible bruise on the white hand; she bent down to look at it.

"What have you done to your pretty hand, Doris?" she said. "What a frightful bruise!"

"Knocked it against something," was the vague reply. But Mattie saw the burning flush on her sister's face.

"What a pity. Now you will be married with a black, dreadful-looking bruise on your hand. That will not get well in ten days."

"Sometimes I think it will never get well at all, Mattie," said Lady Doris, "it has been done some weeks already; I forget how long."

Mattie kissed the dark skin, and Lady Doris shuddered as she remembered whose lips had rested on that hand before.

"When is Earle coming?" she asked; and Lady Doris answered:

"On the eighth; he cannot leave London before; you have no idea what a famous man he is becoming, Mattie."

She was glad to hear it; yet the old familiar prayer rose to her lips. Without knowing why, she said to herself: "Heaven save Earle!"

CHAPTER LXXV.

THE eighth of August! When had any day so beautiful shone before? It was as though the birds had woke earlier to sing! How the sun was shining and the flowers blooming! Lady Doris opened her eyes to the fairest and loveliest day that had ever dawned.

"Earle is coming to-day!" was her first thought.

"Earle is coming!" sung the birds.

"Earle is coming!" whispered the wind as it stirred the sweet green leaves. She had rested well; for it seemed to her now that her troubles were nearly ended. In two more days she would be his wife; then, who could touch her, what evil come to her?

Earle was to be at Linleigh by noon. The hours would roll so swiftly, so sweetly by until then. Only two days! She sung to herself sweet little snatches of love songs.

While she was dressing she looked at herself in wonder; could it be the same Doris who once thought nothing on earth of any value except money and grandeur? Could she have so mingled her love and life into another's as almost to have lost her own identity, and to think of nothing except Earle?

"I never thought that I should be so much in love," she said to herself. "How strange it seems."

She did not quite understand herself. It was not that she loved Earle so passionately: the capability for great love was not hers.

It was not that; it was that Earle, the master-mind, had, by the force and nobility of his own character, completely influenced her, and had won a complete ascendency over her.

She had not much power of loving; what she had was his. But Earle represented peace, happiness and prosperity to her—Earle was her sure haven of rest, her shield against all evil, her refuge against her direst enemy and bitter foe, Lord Vivianne.

So, welcome, bright, sunny day!—welcome golden sun and sweet flowers.

The post brought her her daily love letter; but it was brief. It said simply:

"I can not write much to my darling. I shall see her to-day, and, in two days more, she will be mine until death parts us."

He thought of the words when he saw them again.

Every face wore its brightest look at the breakfast table that day. The earl and countess were happy in their beautiful daughter's happiness; Mattie, because she entered so easily into the joy of others.

"Doris," said Mattie, "will you come out? We shall have just time for a stroll in the woods before Earle comes."

Lady Doris laughed.

"I really can not, Mattie. The spirit of unrest is on me; I can not go anywhere or do anything until I have seen Earle."

"Have you decided yet about your wedding dress?" asked Mattie. "This strange caprice of silence makes me afraid to speak; but, silence or not, it is high time that it was seen about."

Lady Doris laughed.

"I am so amused at myself, Mattie," she said. "If any one had ever told me, some years, even some months since, that I should be quite indifferent over my wedding dress, I would not have believed it."

"But why are you indifferent?" asked Mattie. "I cannot understand. Is it because you are not marrying a nobleman—is it because you are marrying Earle?"

"No," was the reply. "you can believe me or not, Mattie, just as you please, but I assure you I am more proud in marrying Earle than if I were marrying a king."

"So I should imagine. Earle is a king; then why this strange desire for secrecy?"

The beautiful eyes were raised wistfully to her face.

"I may tell you, perhaps, some day, Mattie, but not now, dear—not now. You will marry some good, kindly man, Mattie—some one like yourself, who never knew the fiery heat of temptation; who has always kept—as you have kept—his eyes on Heaven; then, some day, dear, when you are sitting with your little children around you, I shall come to you—world-worn and weary, perhaps, who knows!—longing to lay my head in the clover grass, and then I may tell you all—but not now."

"Then there is a secret?" said Mattie, gently.

"Yes," was the wary reply, "there is a secret."

The words seemed half forced from her.

"Does Earle know it?" asked Mattie.

"No, and never will. Do not talk to me, dear; you have been my sister many years, and I love you very much; if ever I seek a confidant it will be you. You need not be anxious over my wedding dress, Mattie.

"Lady Linleigh has presented me with my trousseau, and she tells me that no royal princess ever had a more sumptuous one; she told me also that a box would come from Paris to day, for you and for me; rely upon it, that will contain my wedding dress."

"How kind Lady Linleigh is to you," said Mattie. "I do not think your own mother could love you better."

"I do not think she would love me half so much," was the laughing reply. Then, in the warm, sunlit air, they heard the sharp clang of the clock—eleven. "He will be here in an hour," said Doris.

"Shall you not go and change your dress?" asked the simple little foster sister. "I thought great ladies always dressed very grandly to receive their lovers."

"My dear Mattie," was the coquettish reply, "could I look better?"

No; she could not. A white dress of Indian muslin showed every curve of the beautiful figure. It was open at the throat, and a lovely rose nestled against the white breast; it was relieved by dashes of blue, and the long, waving, golden hair was fastened by a single blue ribbon.

No jewels, no court attire, no magnificence of dress ever became her as did this: she looked young, fresh, and fair as the dawn of a bright spring morning. No one looking at her could have guessed that the foul canker of sin had entered that young heart and soul.

"I am very happy here," she continued, languidly. "I am watching the butterflies and the flowers. Look at that one, Mattie, with the gorgeous purple wings; see how he hovers round that tall, white lily, then he goes away to the clove carnations; he does not know which to choose. Oh, happy butterfly, to have such a choice! I wonder what it is like, Mattie, to feel quite free from care?"

They were seated under a group of white acacia trees on the lawn, and with every breath of wind the fragrant blossoms fell in a sweet shower over them; the sun shone on the rippling fountains, on the fair flowers, and on the faces of the two girls.

"Free from care!" repeated Mattie, with something like surprise. "Why, my darling, if you are not free from care, who is?"

"I was not speaking or even thinking of myself; I was merely thinking how happy all kinds of birds, and butterflies, and flowers must be to enjoy the dew, and the sunshine, and the sweet winds."

"Happy; but they have no soul, Doris."

She laughed a low, bitter laugh that pierced Mattie like the point of a sword.

"A soul!" she repeated. "I am not sure that a soul brings happiness. Those who have souls have the responsibility of saving them."

"Doris, you do not deserve to be happy, for you are not good," cried Mattie, and three days afterward she remembered the words with the keenest pain.

But Lady Doris was unusually gentle. She bent down and kissed the kindly face.

"I am not good; but I am going to try to be better, dear. It seems to be part of my nature to say bad things. I am not quite sure if I always mean them. Hark, Mattie; I hear the sound of carriage-wheels! Earle is coming!"

The beautiful face grew quite white in its intensity of feeling.

Mattie rose from her seat.

"He will like best," she said, "to meet you alone. I will tell him you are here."

It seemed to Doris that the sun shone more golden, the wind seemed to whisper more sweetly, when she heard the sound of footsteps and the voice she loved so well. The next moment strong, living arms were clasped round her, passionate kisses fell on her face, lips, and hands.

"My darling!" cried Earle. "My wife, so soon to be my wife!"

It was one happy half hour, stolen almost from paradise, for he loved her so dearly. He found heaven in her face, and she was at rest, at peace, with him.

Then Lord Linleigh and Mattie came—the earl with happy smiles and merry jests; he was so glad in her joy.

"Love is very delightful," he said; "but, Doris, we must offer something substantial to a traveler. Suppose we substitute cold chicken and Madeira. Then Lady Linleigh desired me to say that a most wonderful box had arrived from Paris, and she wanted you to unpack it."

Then he bent down and kissed the fair face so dear to them all.

"I can hardly believe that we are to lose you in two days, my darling," he said.

"Nor can I believe that I shall win her," said Earle. "I often have the impression that I shall wake up and find it a dream, and that Earle Moray will be in the cornfields at home."

"You are a poet," laughed the earl, "and poets are not accountable for anything."

Then they went together to lunch. Mattie knew that it was by Lady Linleigh's orders that the table was so gracefully ornamented with flowers and fruit; the pretty thought was like her.

They spent perhaps one of the happiest hours of their lives together. Then Lady Linleigh said:

"Now for the Parisian box. Earle, you must be banished while that is unpacked."

The ladies went together up to Lady Linleigh's room.

"We will have no curious ladies' maids or servants," she said; "we will unpack this ourselves. The key came to me this morning by registered letter. Doris, my dear, the box and its contents are yours—you shall unpack them."

Lady Studleigh took the key and opened it. There were layers of fine white wadding and tissue paper. One by one Lady Doris raised the costly packets in her hands and laid them down.

There was a bride-maid's costume all complete, a marvel of pink and white silk, with everything to match; white silk shoes, with little pink rosettes; a white bonnet, that looked as though a puff of wind would blow it away! and a costly pink plume; gloves, fan, jewels, all matched exactly, and Mattie's face grew radiant.

"All this for me! Oh, Lady Linleigh, how am I to thank you?"

"By looking your prettiest in them," laughed the countess, as she placed the fairy-like bonnet on the brown, shining hair. "I thought pink would suit you, Mattie; so it does. See how nice she looks, Doris."

Lady Studleigh kissed her foster sister's face.

"Mattie always looks nice," she said, "just as she always looks, happy and good."

Then came the bride's costume.

"You would not allow the earl and myself to show that we felt your wedding to be the happiest event of our lives," said Lady Linleigh; "but you could not prevent my intention of seeing you dressed as a bride."

Such a wedding dress!—one of Worth's most marvelous combinations of white satin and white lace—a dress fit for a queen; and it was trimmed so beautifully with wreaths of orange blossoms.

There, in a pretty scented box, lay the bridal veil—such a wonder of lace, so exquisitely worked, large enough to cover a bride, yet so fine and delicate that it could be drawn through a wedding ring. Then came the wreath of orange blossoms.

Lady Studleigh was accustomed by this time to splendor—there was little in the way of dress that could ever give her the agreeable sensation of surprise; but she uttered a little cry of admiration as she saw the elegant costly presents the countess had arranged for her.

Everything was complete and beautiful, even to the little bouquet holder, made of pure white pearls. She took Lady Linleigh's hands and kissed them.

"Are you pleased, my darling?" she asked, gently.

"Oh, Lady Linleigh, you have left me without words—quite without words! I cannot thank you."

The countess bent her head.

"Could your own mother have pleased you more?" she asked.

"No—a thousand times no!" was the sincere reply.

Then Mattie said: "Lady Linleigh, let us dress Doris in her bridal robes, so that Earle may see her."

And the countess laughed as she gave consent.

"What does she look like?" cried Mattie, in a passion of admiration, as they placed the bridal veil on the golden head.

"It would require a poet to tell us," said the countess;" and as we have one close at

hand, we will ask him. Mattie, go and bring Earle here. Close the door after you. I would not like every one to know what we have been doing."

CHAPTER LXXVI.

AND presently, Earle stood before a figure that seemed to him too beautiful to be real—a tall, graceful figure that seemed to rise from the waves of white satin and lace—as a graceful flower from its stem.

Through the bridal veil he caught the sheen of the golden hair—the dainty color of the face—the deep color of the violet eyes. The sweet odor of orange-blossoms floated to him.

"Doris," he said, in a low voice; "my beautiful love, let me see your face.

It was Lady Linleigh who threw back the veil, so that he might see the lovely, blushing face. Tears stood in the young lover's eyes, although he tried to control his emotion.

"Is it possible, Lady Linleigh?" he asked, "that this is my wife—that—well, I had better not say too much; you do not think I shall wake up and find it all a dream?"

"No, it is real enough."

Then he drew nearer to her.

"You will let me give you one kiss, Doris—Lady Linleigh will not be horrified. You will be Lady Moray soon. What is my poor name worth, that it should be so highly honored?"

He kissed her sweet lips.

"I must be careful," he said. "You look like a fairy. Perhaps you would vanish if a mere mortal touched you. Now, let me look at you, darling! at your dress, your veil, and your wreath! The picture is perfect. I wish that I could put it into words."

He did, afterward—into words, over which all England wept. Then, for a few minutes the three—Lady Linleigh Mattie and Earle—stood looking at her in silence, they hardly know why. Then Earle said:

"When I see that pretty veil again, it will be on the head of my beloved wife."

Then they all three looked at the veil. Heaven help him! he little dreamed how and when he should see it again.

If they could have had the faintest foreknowledge of that, the tragedy might have been averted. Then Earle went away, and the bridal robes were taken to Lady Linleigh's boudoir.

"They will not be seen there," said the countess. "I will lock the door and keep the key; to morrow it will not matter."

And Mattie helped her—poor, hapless child!—placed them over a chair so that the shining robes might not be injured.

It was Earle who proposed a ramble to the woods; dinner was to be later than usual.

"Let us all three go," he said. "Mattie with us, Doris; it may be years before we meet all together so happy again."

So it was settled, and they spent the remainder of that sunny, happy day together. They were sitting in a green sunny dell, with the fall grass and wild flowers springing luxuriantly around them, the tall trees spreading overhead, the little birds filling the wood with song.

Lady Doris had never been so happy; she had almost forgotten the dark background of sorrow and care. Mattie was happy, for it was impossible to see them so young, so loving, with their graceful caresses and love, without rejoicing with them.

"This is like Brackenside," said Earle. "How often we have sat together in the woods there! And Mrs. Brace used to wonder how the farms would advance if they were left to us."

"And well she might wonder," said Mattie, "even when I believed Doris to be my own sister, I thought her the most beautiful, but the most useless of human beings!"

"Thank you," laughed Lady Studleigh.

"It is altogether like a fairy tale," said Earle; "if I had read such a story, I should say it was untrue; I should call such a story exaggerated; yet, here we are, the living, breathing actors in the drama."

"It is not such a very wonderful history, Earle," said Lady Studleigh; "there are many private marriages, many children brought up in ignorance of their real name and station; many a man like you—a gentleman and genius by birth—rises by the simple force of his own merit to be one of the magnates of the land."

Then she sighed to herself, and her brightness was for one moment overcast as she remembered that hers was the only part of the story that was improbable or extraordinary; no one would believe that she had been guilty as she had been.

How often, in after years, they went back to that bright, long day. Earle never saw a wild flower, or a green fern, that he did not turn from it with a sick, aching heart.

They dined together; the earl would not have any visitors; it was the last day but one of their darling, and they would have it all to themselves.

There they sat in the gloaming, and Doris sung to them. Who knew the pain, the aching in one lonely heart? who knew the quiet heroism of the girl with the brown, kindly face and shining hair?

The lamps were lighted, and Lord Linleigh, laughing to think how they had all been engrossed, drew a large parcel toward himself.

"This shows," he said, "that we have something unusual going on. This packet of periodicals has been in the library for several days, and no one has thought of opening it. It is the first time such a thing has happened."

He unfastened the string, and looked through them casually. One, however, seemed to attract his attention; it was beautifully illustrated, and he laid it down with a smile.

"Read that, Doris," he said; "it contains a warning for you."

"What is the warning, papa? I would rather take it from you than from print."

"I have not read it. Look at the engraving. It is evidently the story of a bride who, on her wedding eve, dressed herself in her bridal robes—girlish vanity, I suppose—just to see how she looks. The wedding dress catches fire, and she is burned to death. Moral: young ladies should never try on their wedding dresses beforehand."

"What a tragical story!" said the countess.

"I can never see the use of such stories," said Mattie. "They make everyone sad who reads them."

"Burned to death on her wedding-eve," said Earle, "and all because she wanted to see if she should be charming enough in the eyes of her lover! There is no poetic justice in that."

"What was the heroine's name, papa?" asked Doris.

"Mariam Dale. I always notice that if a heroine is to come to any pathetic end she is called Miriam."

"Did she love her lover very much?" asked Doris.

"Read the story, my dear," said the earl, indolently. "It is not much in my line. The engraving caught my attention—a beautiful, frantic girl, dressed in bridal robes and wreathed in flames. There is something terrible about it."

Doris rose from her seat and opened the book. Then, after looking at the pictures, she laid it down with a long shuddering sigh.

"Stories often fail in poetic justice," she said. "If that girl is young and innocent, if she had done no wrong, why should she have been killed on her wedding-eve?"

"Stories are, after all, but sketches taken from life," said the earl, "and life often seems to us short-seeing mortals to fail in poetic justice, although, no doubt, everything is right and just in the sight of Heaven. Doris is growing serious over it."

"We have tried her wedding-dress on this morning; but there was no fire near it, and no harm came of it."

"I am no believer in those stupid superstitions, although I have heard it is unlucky to try on a wedding dress. Still I do not believe it will make one iota of difference."

"How can it?" said Earle, calmly, and they all remembered that conversation a few hours afterward.

The ninth of August came, and Lord Linleigh, as they sat at breakfast, said, laughingly:

"Now for a sensation! What will be said and thought by the different members of this establishment when it known that there is to be a wedding to-morrow? It passes my comprehension. I promised to be patient; but it was almost cruel of you, Doris, to place me in such a predicament.

"I suppose I must call the principal servants together and tell them that Lady Studleigh is to be married to-morrow without form or ceremony of any kind. There will be what the papers call a startling surprise!"

"We have plenty to do," said the countess; "there will be no time for rambles in the wood. Ulric, when you had made your announcement, will you go to the vicarage? You have arrangements to make there, and you must take Earle with you. I cannot spare Doris to him this morning."

So the gentleman went away.

"Is is a strange whim of Doris', this desire for secrecy," said the earl, as they rode along. "I must confess I do not understand it, do you?"

"Not in the least," replied Earle; "she seemed very intent upon it. I think, Lord Linleigh," he added, with a laugh, "that I shall learn one thing as I grow older."

"What will that be?" asked the earl.

"Not to try to fathom the caprice of ladies, but to yield gracefully to it."

"You are a wise man," said Lord Linleigh, with a look of sincere admiration; "that is the true secret of wedded content."

While Lord Linleigh and Earle were busy at the vicarage, where it required some time and some persuasion to induce the rector to believe what they had to say, the ladies were wonderfully busy. The news spread, and, as Lord Linleigh had foreseen, had caused a great sensation.

Lady Studleigh was to be married to-morrow!—and such a marriage—no ceremony, no gayeties, nothing at all!

Lady Linleigh, had, however, considerably changed the state of affairs, by saying that the arrangements for the wedding had been hurried so as to permit of Lady Doris going abroad in August, and, before going, she intended making a handsome present to each member of the household. Their opinion was, in consequence, considerably changed.

When the earl and his household met at dinner there was laughter and amusement—much to tell; the rector's amazement, the astonishment of every one who heard the news. The earl was in high spirits, laughing and jesting all the more that he saw his wife's gentle face growing sad and sorrowful.

"You will be gone this time to-morrow," she said. "I shall fancy I hear your voice and see your face all day, and for many long days."

"Yes," said Doris, softly, "I shall be gone this time to-morrow."

"But you will not be so very far away," said Mattie.

"No further than London," said Earle. "I like crossing the Channel; do you, Doris?"

"No; I am not a good sailor," she replied.

"Ladies seldom are," said the earl. "Katie, I have resolved Doris' last evening with us shall be the happiest she has spent at Linleigh. We will not have one sad word."

CHAPTER LXXVII.

THE evening was over at last, and to Doris it had been the happiest day, perhaps, of her life. Lord Linleigh had sent to his cellars for some of his choicest wines—wines that only saw daylight when the daughters of the house or its heirs christened—wine that was like the nectar of the gods, golden of hue, fragrant of perfume, and exhilarating as the water of life, old traditions sing of. He had ordered the desert to be placed outside in the rose garden.

"We will imitate the ancients," he said; "we will drink our wine to the odor of sweet flowers."

So they sat and watched the golden sun set in the west. It seemed to them it had never set in such glorious majesty before.

The sky was crimson, and gold, and purple, then pale violet, and pearly gleams shone out; a soft veil seemed to shroud the western skies, and then the sun had set.

Lady Doris had sat for some time watching the sun set in silence. Suddenly she said:

"I shall never forget my last sunset."

"Your last sunset?" repeated Earle. "Do you mean that you will never see it set again?"

"No; I mean my last sunset at Linleigh. Earle, if all those strange stories of heaven are true, it must be a beautiful place; and this fair sky, with its gleaming colors, is only the wrong side after all."

The faint light died in the west, the flowers closed their tired eyes, the lovely twilight reigned soft and fragrant, the air, grew almost faint with perfume from lily, from rose, from carnation; then some bird, evidently of erratic habits, began a beautiful vesper hymn, and they sat as though spell-bound.

"A night never to be forgotten," said the earl. "Doris, that little bird is singing your wedding-song."

If they could but have heard what the little bird was telling—a warning and a requiem both in one.

Doris arose and went to the tree in whose branches the bird was hidden; she raised her face to see if she could see it in the thick green leaves. As she stood there, in the light of the dying day, the earl said:

"You will have a beautiful wife, Earle."

They all looked at her as she stood there in a beautiful dress of shining white silk, with a set of opals for ornaments; her fair white arms and white neck were half shrouded in lace, her golden hair was fastened negligently with a diamond arrow, and hung in shining ripples over her shoulders; the faint light showed her face, fair and beautiful as a bright star.

"You will have a beautiful wife," he repeated, thoughtfully.

And as they all saw her then, they saw her until memory reproduced no more pictures for them.

"We have a fine moonlight night," said Earle. "Doris, this time to-morrow evening we shall be leaning over the steamboat side, watching the light in the water, and the track of the huge wheels; then you will be my wife."

Lady Linleigh rose and drew her shawl round her shapely shoulders.

"We must not forget to-morrow in the happiness of to-night," she said; "it will not do to have a pale bride. I am going in."

But first she went up to the tree where Doris was standing.

"It is rather a hopeless task, Doris, to look for a bird in the growing darkness," she said; "and, my darling, I have come to wish you good-night."

Doris turned to her, and bending her graceful head, laid it on her mother's shoulder.

"It is not only good-night, but good-bye," she said; "I shall hardly see you to-morrow."

She clasped her soft arms round the countess' neck.

"Good-bye, dearest Lady Linleigh," she said, "you have been very good to me; you have made home very happy for me; you have been like the dearest mother to me. Good-night; may Heaven bless you!"

Such unusual, such solemn words for her to use! The two fair faces touched each other. There was a warm, close embrace, then Lady Linleigh went away. When did she forget that parting, or the last look on that face?

"I am jealous," said Lord Linleigh, parting the branches, and looking at his daughter. "I wanted the kindest good-night. What has my daughter to say to me? It is my farewell, also. To-morrow you will be Lady Moray, and I shall be forgotten."

Her heart was strangely touched and softened.

"Not forgotten by me, papa," she said; "next to Earle, I shall always love you better than any one in the world."

"Next to Earle. Well, I must be content. That is enough. Good-night, my dear and only child; may Heaven send you a happy life."

He, too, took away with him the memory of the sweetest face and tender eyes; a memory never to die. He nodded to Earle.

"I must be lenient," he said, "and give you young lovers ten minutes longer. I shall be in the library, Earle. Come and smoke a cigar with me. I have something to say to you."

Mattie had gone to her room; Doris had promised to meet her there. The little bird, startled by the voices, perhaps, had ceased to sing; and the lovers stood under the spreading tree alone.

"Ten minutes out here with you, my darling," said Earle; "it is like two years in paradise. How kind they are to us, Doris; how happy we shall be!"

But he had not many words. He laid the golden head on his breast, where he could see and kiss the fair face; he held the white hand in his; he could only say, over and over again, how happy they should be to-morrow.

His wife to morrow! Surely the moon had never shone upon a fairer picture or a lighter heart. The ten minutes were soon over.

"Good-bye to the moonlight," said Earle, to the tired flowers and shining stars, and the fair, sleeping world!"

He parted with her at the foot of the broad staircase; she was going to her room.

"Good-night," said Earle, kissing the red lips; "good-night, and sweet dreams."

But when he had gone about two steps away, she called him back again. She raised her arms and clasped them round his neck, she raised her face that he might kiss it again.

"My darling Earle, my love Earle, my lover, my husband!" she said, with a passion of love in her face, "good-night."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SEPARATED.

BY I. P. M.

"What matters the river which winds between?
It is easy to speak across!" she cried.
But his answer rang through the sunny scene
"It is better far to keep side by side—
Is there nought to whisper 'twixt you and me?
And the river widens towards the sea!"

They set me a-dreaming—those words they spoke—
A dreaming of hearts which are sundered so,
By an angry word or a thoughtless joke,
Or by misty something that none can know.
Only henceforth two go ever apart,
Too far for the touching of heart with heart.

And each soul goes yearning apart to cry—
"O, my cherished friend of the vanished days,
We have lost each other—and scarce know why!
And only this bitter-sweet comfort stays,
That despite the mists which have rolled between,
Yet our love is what it has ever been!"

Then we strain our eyes to the ocean vast
(What does it keep at its farther side?)
Where the widest river is merged at last
And the parted strands can no more divide.
Perchance as we sail for its unknown shore
We shall hail the dip of a friendly oar,

And, lo, comes the vanished friend to our side,
"I am here—the same as I used to be—
The river will never more divide,
It has lost itself in Death's mighty sea:
We have left behind all the doubt and fret
—But love that was faithful is with us yet."

Life's Possibilities.

BY G. L. M.

RUTH FORDYCE sat holding a card in her hands, while a faint smile played round her lips, and the suspicion of a tear trembled beneath the delicately veined eyelids.

Ruth had almost learned how "to suffer and be strong"; but there were times when the lesson seemed well-nigh forgotten, and when circumstances became too hard for her.

This was one.

The card in her hands was only an invitation, couched in most formal terms—a printed formula, in fact—but it had come from Clare Reynolds—Clare, who was once upon a time her schoolfellow—once upon a time her supplanter—who had suddenly remembered her existence, and sent her a card for her next garden-party.

As she sat in the wicker-chair, holding it, that bit of pasteboard brought many things to her memory—other times, other faces, other hopes. Ruth had not always been poor, and forlorn, and friendless.

When she and Clare were younger there had been the old Vicarage-house, under the shadow of the Cheviots, to which Clare was kindly welcomed, and loyally received.

There was a circle of home-faces, each one as dear as the rest. There were friends beyond the gates, whose faces smiled back at the Vicar's daughter.

Ah!—and there was—last of all—that one, more loved than the rest, who turned the little moorland village into Paradise, and filled Ruth's life with purest joy—there was Raymond Vaughan.

Raymond was tall and handsome. Girls seldom stay to analyse their lovers' characteristics. They take them for what they seem, in a beautiful spirit of trustfulness that may—or may not—stand the wear and tear of life.

Ruth had accepted Raymond pretty much on this principle. He had pleaded "Love me, my darling—trust me, my dear one,"—and she had both loved and trusted, all too readily.

That was before Clare came.

Clare had the bluest eyes and the most golden hair in the world. She had an infantile sort of prettiness, and a smile that was absolutely beguiling.

These hid a shallow little soul beneath, but, once again, Ruth had not stayed to measure its depths, and she believed in Clare almost as much as she believed in Raymond.

Clare could babble—still in an infantile way—about men and things. She was superficial, but her memory was good.

She had great powers of assimilation, and she was clever enough to appear better than she was. The little pretence caught Raymond's fancy, together with the blue eyes and the golden hair.

Ruth was dark, with soft brown hair, and brown eyes set in a finely carved, spiritualle face.

She was a contrast to her friend in other ways, for she was clever than Clare, and had a hundred times more depth of character.

Yet the finiteness of Raymond's perceptions made him turn from her to pursue the moth-like Clare, and to forget Ruth.

It is an old story, that proves the weakness of some men's natures, and the strength of some girls' wills.

Clare came between them, and Raymond forgot his softly-breathed vows. They left Ruth lonely, and ere long a greater loneliness still fell upon her, when father, and home, and friends faded from her; and she—Ruth Fordyce—the idolized child of the Vicarage—went forth to earn her living by the aid of her brush.

All this happened long ago; yet the pain came back in all its freshness as she held that bit of pasteboard in her hands, and thought of what might have been.

"The world has gone on well with Clare," said Ruth, with a sigh. "I am struggling to make my way. Here is made for her. Still, since she asks me, I will go and see her. We are both of us a long remove from that girlhood in which she wrecked my happiness, and made her own, and I would really like to see her again."

She sat down and wrote a kindly little note of acceptance, and when this was done, took up her palette once more.

"I must think over fit raiment for the occasion," she mused. "A garden-party! It is a good while since I went to one before. I wonder if I shall see a soul whom I know. At any rate, I shall see Clare, and—Raymond. Perhaps they will be a little kindly—and I am a very lonely woman."

There was a slight pain at her heart, a slight contraction of her brow.

"The world has forgotten me," said Ruth with a shiver. Never in all her life had her forlornness so risen up before her eyes.

"Miss Fordyce!" cried a boyish voice outside. "Do you know they've hung your picture splendidly at the Academy? I wish you would come and see it."

The artist turned to look at the frank young face that smiled back at her from the studio door.

"Some day, Bertram—some day I shall go. But I must finish this pot-boiler now. I want a new dress, my dear boy, for, do you know, I am going to a garden-party next week."

"I am awfully glad," returned Bertram Graham joyfully. "You work far too hard."

"What would you wear if you were I?" she asked, catching a little of his gladness.

She had turned, with her brush arrested in the air. A laugh trembled on her lips and was reflected in her eyes. At that moment she looked almost young, and almost handsome.

Her laugh was so unusual that it infected the boy.

"Wear black lace," he said, with a happy inspiration. "You look stunning in black lace."

"Thank you," she returned, a little tremulously, for it was long since any one had noticed what she wore, or how she looked. "I will take your advice."

"I will wear black, but not lace," she added to herself when he disappeared.

She worked hard, but with the work came pleasant day-dreams, in which she indulged from day to day.

They made her work sweeter and happier, they made her believe in a new Clare—created after her own imaginings—and they lasted until she greeted the real Clare Vaughan. Then she awoke from her dreams. It was all so unlike what she had thought.

The Vaughans were so aggressively prosperous that they bewildered Ruth. Clare had amplified into a matronhood of large proportions, and she cultivated manners, and wore diamonds, and silks that rustled tumultuously.

Raymond had grown imposing in appearance; but this—had Ruth only known it—was part of his capital, and aided him emphatically.

He received his guests with a benignity that took the edge off his wife's yellow locks, and the empressement of his manner was almost as good as a benediction to those who prosperity entitled them to receive it.

A little of this blessedness fell to Ruth's lot. Raymond Vaughan held her hand, and looked with pensive intentness into her face—a touch of sympathy stealing into his own. For the life of him he could not help thinking what a fine-looking woman this old sweetheart of his had become.

There was something distinguished in her appearance. Was it the glint of yellow in the roses at her waist? Was it that antique clasp of deep purple amethysts that fastened her gown at the neck?

The boy had given her roses in a burst of youthful generosity. He wanted his old maid to look well "for the honor of the lodgings," he told her, and the clasp was one that had belonged to the faded Vicarage-days.

Raymond Vaughan's eyes followed her in a sort of wonder.

He saw Clare's effusive greeting, and an effusive dismissal. He watched the guest sink into a deep arm chair, under the shade of the beeches, and sip the cup of tea brought by an attentive footman, and then—why, then he, too, had to think of other guests, and try to forget Ruth.

Ah, well! for many years she had been learning how to play the part of a forgotten personage. It becomes quite simple—when you are used to it.

Left to herself in that crown of people, Ruth leaned back and looked on. There was nothing else for her to do. Nobody spoke to her. Nobody introduced her to others.

Clare was busy. Raymond was offering his arm and his attentions to various robust dowagers, one after the other.

He liked to be attentive to elderly women who looked prosperous and stylish.

Clare came and simpered over Ruth once, and Raymond smiled at her from afar.

He was the least bit afraid of his old love, even in her poverty, and hardly dared to feel comfortable in her presence. But, for the rest, Ruth was dismally isolated and forlorn.

Presently the cool air and the waving trees brought other thoughts and set her dreaming again. The grounds were well laid out, and full of color.

The scent of roses came stealing around; in a meadow across the river some one was cutting hay with a machine, and in her quiet shelter the sound made music in her ears.

She could almost fancy herself back again in the Vicarage garden of auld lang syne. She closed her eyes with a sense of pain, and owned that she was disappointed.

Her place with Clare—as with Raymond—had been filled up already. She was nowhere. Even Clare had learnt effectually how to do without her.

By-and-bye some voices reached her. She seemed to recognise one of them, and listened to hear it once more.

"Yes," said the speaker, "and I want to meet her again—Ruth Fordyce! You are lucky to have her here, man, the papers are full of her praises. Here is the picture of the day. But where is she?"

"It is John," murmured Ruth to herself, "John Selwyn. Ah! I knew him well in those days."

"Is it possible?" she heard Raymond ejaculate. "Ruth—a celebrity!"

"Yes," returned the other more slowly, "I thought that was why you had asked her to-day."

"N-o. We did not know it; I—Clare—felt rather sentimental when she went to the Academy and saw her picture. It is a feather in Clare's cap that she liked it so well. It reminded her of her youth."

Ruth could not see Raymond, but she felt he smiled doubtfully.

"I have not yet seen it," he added more slowly. "But, after what you have said, I shall make a point of doing so."

"Yes, do. It is a lovely thing—very much in the style of Leighton's works. It touches you, you know."

Then the speaker turned, and Ruth rose.

"John," she said, as she held out both her hands, "John, don't you remember me? I am Ruth Fordyce."

"Remember you!"

If Raymond Vaughan had put her out of remembrance, John Selwyn had not. He had been no privileged lover of the past.

He had only been an old, true friend, who loved Ruth, but kept his love to himself. Now he went up to her with a glad smile.

"Have I ever forgotten you?" he murmured softly, as he bent over her hands.

John's tone said more than his words, and a wave of color swept over her faded countenance.

"I thought I had no friends left," she said, with a laugh and an upward glance, which was strangely mingled with shyness.

John looked round quickly. He seemed, all at once, to understand the situation.

He drew forward a chair, and sat down near her.

"The world will be only too glad to make friends with the successful artist, Miss Fordyce," he returned, a shade bitterly. "The world adores success. You are clever, Ruth. I feel that every time I go to see your picture."

She laughed now—a merry laugh that did him good.

"I was wrong when I said I had no friends left," she confessed. "A boy-friend came and told me it was well hung, but—do you know, I have never seen it yet."

"We will go together, Ruth."

"And take the boy," she pleaded.

"Ah, the boy! Who is he? Ruth, may I come and see you? Now that I have found you I do not mean to lose sight of you in a hurry. May I come?"

Ruth nodded her head. Somehow her heart was rather full just then; the horizon had suddenly widened, and life had grown bright and happier.

What had brought the change? Only a clasp of the hand. Only a smile. Only a human voice.

But to the lonely woman there had come the wonderful intuition that she was no longer alone, and the very sky was gleaming and glowing with new and triumphant light. She grew younger as she leaned back and looked at him.

How strong and well he looked! Life had used him kindly, and he had developed. Ruth contrasted him with Raymond, and wondered if she had been more than a little blind "in those days."

At any rate, it was good just to sit still and hear his voice. She listened, and felt her heart throb with quickened interest, not unmingled with pain.

He seemed to recall so much more than himself. Ruth almost forgot the living, real present.

When, at last, she rose to take her leave, she held out her hand with a warm smile.

"Good-bye, John," she said, using unconsciously the well-remembered name. "You have made my afternoon very pleasant—so different from what it threatened to become."

"But I am not going to lose sight of you," he said anxiously. "Remember, I have been away from England ever since I heard of your—engagement, and it was only at the Academy that I learnt that you were still Ruth Fordyce. I knew the old landscape, too."

The pleading in his tone—and it may be also the lapse of time—robbed his words of any sting or pain that they might once have caused her.

She heard him with a certain far-away air.

"Yes," she replied slowly. "Perhaps we may meet—who knows? But I am not a society woman, and I am a very busy one. I am wedded to my art, John. The world did not care whether I lived or died. My art kept me going."

"You don't forbid my visits?" he inquired eagerly, bending down to catch a glance of her face.

"Forbid! No; how could I? You carry an atmosphere of my youth about you. But I have only pictures to show you—daubs, many of them—and they will not interest you."

"Ruth!"

He paused. They were near Mrs. Vaughan now, and Ruth, with her well-bred air, was saying farewell. The contrast between the two women startled John. He looked at Ruth, and a keen wish that he might still have the chance of becoming nearer and dearer to her swept across his mind.

But Ruth, all unconscious, moved away.

"My art is my life," she said again as they went down the staircase.

She was thinking of Claire with a little wonder.

He was thinking of Ruth.

"I am—glad I never married," said Ruth Fordyce slowly; but John Selwyn laughed uneasily.

"That does not apply to the future, does it?" he asked quietly. "Because——"

"Because what?" She looked up quickly.

"Because if it did—I should be a very unhappy man—that is all."

Ruth went home feeling thoughtful and perplexed; and that night the boy heard her singing a quaint old ballad of "Long, long ago."

Her singing touched him not a little, but it affected the singer still more deeply.

She rose, and stood looking out upon the moonlight and the sweet summer night.

"After all," she said slowly and tenderly, "Life holds possibilities—does it not, even for me?"

And the soft wind from the sea went over the quiet world with a murmur as if of "Yes, yes, yes," that filled her with untold content.

There was no glamor, no fervor, no wild kindling of emotion.

Instead—there was deep content. Life still "held possibilities," even for the lonely Ruth.

Presently she came back to her easel, and bending down she kissed it.

"In fair or foul weather, through sunshine and shadow, this has been—this is—my friend," she murmured softly.

She took up her palette. An inspiration came to her soul. She seized her brushes. An hour later—she had almost forgotten John.

The "possibilities" she had meant were unconnected with him.

Before her lay fame, honor, victory. And before all she saw the end of her goal. She had spoken truly when she said "I am glad I never married."

When the world had forsaken her, art had remained true.

She would be true to her art.

John, himself, was but one other pleasant memory, and she did not know how nearly she had touched his life in that never-to-be forgotten past.

The world had mercifully left her one pleasure, for memories are the heritage of earth's lonely children, and the soul lives in the dreamland of its youth.

* * * * * *

The morning's sunshine brought John Selwyn, with a great purpose filling his soul; and when she placed her hand in his, she seemed to feel and know that something momentous was before her.

"Ruth!"

The ring of his voice startled her first.

Was she after all to be shaken in her resolve? Would Art fail to satisfy her soul?

Was there magic in the pulsation of his tones—in the throb of his voice? Bit by bit, the long-hidden passion of the man's heart came to the surface, it was almost too deep for utterance; he had tried to live it down—and had failed.

"Life has possibilities," he said, using unconsciously her own words to herself. "May we not share them together, look forward to them, hand in hand?"

And she, with earnest eyes looking into his, and reading in them all he meant to say. What could she do but whisper that she would think, would wait, would see?

"Ah, sweet woman, have we not waited? Have we not seen? I have!" he murmured softly.

And for answer—she left her hand in his.

WHO ARE THE BOERS?

THE Boers of South Africa are just now objects of considerable interest to the British people, as, indeed, they promise to be for many a year to come.

Their history is indissolubly interwoven with the history of South Africa, and during the two hundred and forty odd years of their residence south of the Equator, these strange people furnish one of the most remarkable and interesting of studies.

Theirs may truly be said to be a history of arrested progress. In thought and in mode of life the main body of the South African Dutch remain far more in touch with the seventeenth century than with the nineteenth. It may be not unprofitable to trace very briefly the African life-story of these singular people.

The Dutch were not in the first instance the discoverers of the Cape of Good Hope. The old Portuguese navigators were the first to brave the terrors of the Stormy Cape as they called it.

The British may be said to have been the first to take formal possession of the soil of the Cape of Good Hope. In 1620 Captains Fitzherbert and Shillinge landed there and proclaimed the sovereignty of James I.

Their employers, the East India Company, took no further steps to form a settlement, however, and the proclamation lapsed. In 1652 the Dutch East India Company finally took possession of the Cape, and founded a settlement there.

Governor Van Riebeek and his settlers, isolated as they were, had many difficulties to contend with in the early days of their colonization. The discipline observed was of the most inflexible kind.

In 1657 Jan Wouters, assistant, was condemned "for blasphemous injuries against the characters of females at the Cape, including the commander's wife, to beg pardon on his bare knees, to be bored through the tongue, to forfeit his wages, and to be banished three years."

A sufficiently severe array of penalties, surely, for uttering scandal! But the Dutch Afrikanders have always remained extremely touchy in the matter of slander and libel.

At the present day, in all parts of South Africa, it is the commonest thing to find inserted in the local newspaper such an apology as the following:

"I, the undersigned, A. C. du Plessis, retract hereby everything I have said against the innocent Mr. G. P. Bezuidenhout, calling myself an infamous liar, and striking my mouth with the exclamation, 'You mendacious mouth (Jij leugenachtige bek), why do you lie so?' I declare, further, that I know nothing against the character of Mr. G. P. Bezuidenhout. I call myself, besides, a genuine liar of the first class. (Signed) A. C. du Plessis. Witnesses, P. du Plessis, J. C. Holmes."

This is an actual apology, taken from the columns of a well-known South African paper, De Afrikaanse Patriot!

The settlement, which is the first instance was planted at the Cape solely as a place of refreshment for the Dutch fleets passing to the Indies, slowly increased.

Wives were presently wanted by the settlers, and a number of young girls were sent from the Orphan Houses and Homes in Amsterdam.

In 1670 there were only some ninety of the Dutch East India Company's servants who had been granted their discharge, and had, with the encouragement of the company, taken to farm life.

These ninety men—Dutch mainly, with a few Germans and Danes may be regarded as the true ancestors and forerunners of the present race of South African Boers.

The word Boer, by the way, is not, as some suppose, a term of reproach. It signifies simply a farmer, or a tiller of the soil; but it is pronounced as the English boor, which word meant originally nothing more than "agriculturist."

In 1672 the Dutch East India Company purchased from the Hottentot chiefs, who claimed to be lords of the soil, the whole vast tract of country stretching from Saldanha Bay to the Cape peninsula.

Between 1685 and 1688 came a most important accession of strength to the Dutch settlers. Large numbers of Huguenots were driven from France. By arrangement with the authorities in Holland, it came to pass that some of these French Protestants, to the number of between two hundred and three hundred were taken to the Cape.

These French Huguenots, nearly all steady, honest, and God-fearing folk, became a source of great strength to the rising colony.

They were incorporated, perforce, in the Dutch Reformed Church, and the use of French in official matters was forbidden. The young were to be taught in Dutch, the reading of lessons at the church services in French was presently suppressed, and every effort was made to obliterate the nationality of the new settlers.

So completely successful was this policy that, within a hundred years of the Huguenot landing, the French language had completely died out, and there was but one old man who remembered it.

Resigning themselves to their fate, the Huguenots intermarried with their Dutch fellow settlers, and in no long time became as completely Boers in thought, language, and sympathy as any of their neighbors.

Their prejudices are also, to the heart's core, as purely and essentially Afrikander Dutch. The name of the Transvaal President, by the way, is usually pronounced "Krieger," with a hard but extremely guttural g.

During the last century the Boers spread far and wide into the Cape Colony, traversing pathless deserts, waterless karroos, and difficult mountain country, in search of new homes and pastures.

Many of them were hunters pure and simple, and followed the elephants for ivory.

As they moved inland, magistracies were tardily established in their midst, not lest they might lapse into utter barbarians, but to enable an anxious Government to draw its taxation from the land on which they had settled. Churches and schools followed the settlers yet more tardily.

It may be said that since the admission of the Huguenot element into the settlement at the close of the seventeenth century, there has been little addition to the strain of Dutch and French blood which mainly composes the present race of South African Boers.

At a fair computation the Boer of to-day is two-thirds Dutch, one-sixth French, and one sixth German or Danish.

In the same way, far removed though they have been from churches and pastors, they have yet clung closely to the primitive faith of their forefathers.

Wherever they have trekked, the great Dutch Bible—often more than two hundred years old—and its lessons have gone with them.

At morning and at night, wherever they may be, prayer and thanksgiving are invariably offered up.

It is the fashion among the "Uitlanders" to ridicule the long and somewhat dreary prayers of these Dutch farmers; yet surely it is to the credit of the Boers that, amid every danger and difficulty, they have thus preserved their faith.

Even when marching to fight the Zulu hosts under Dingaan in Natal, they offered up prayers at every halt, and the 400 farmers who met and conquered 10,000 Zulus at the Blood river in 1838 attributed their astounding victory to the direct intervention of the Lord of Hosts in answer to their supplications.

The Boers have large families—from ten to fourteen children is not an uncommon number—the climate is exceedingly healthy, and the Dutch all over South Africa have largely increased since 1806.

In the Cape Colony at the present time time there are between 230,000 and 236,000 Dutch Afrikanders, or Boers. In the Orange Free State there are some Boers; while in the Transvaal, or South African Republic, there are—as far as can be judged from the last census of census of 1890—about 85,000 Dutch Afrikanders.

People who know little about the subject talk very glibly about turning the Dutch out of South Africa. That is a matter of impossibility.

The vast majority of the Boers are rooted firmly to the soil; they care for no other occupation than pastoral farming; and they are not in the least likely to quit the fatherland in which they had been born and bred for two hundred and fifty years past.

There are, unfortunately, people of British blood who seem burning to force on a war between British and Dutch in South Africa. These people are few in number, but they have to be reckoned with.

It may be well to remind them that in the Cape Colony the Dutch Afrikanders (or Boers), who have for many years been loyal and contented subjects of the British crown, far outnumber the British settlers. In the Cape House of Assembly, it is well to remember, the Dutch farmers have a large majority.

In the Orange Free State Republic the population is almost entirely Dutch. In the Transvaal the Boers probably outnumber the British, in spite of the gigantic growth of Johannesburg.

MIDWINTER SEA BATHING.—The people of Varna, on the coast of the Black Sea, in Bulgaria, have a singular custom which they observe at the feast of the Epiphany, which occurs on January 6.

The clergy, both Greeks and Bulgarians, accompanied by an immense crowd, go to the seashore, carrying with them a wooden cross.

This cross is thrown by the clergy into the sea, and thereupon the strongest swimmers jump in after it. The best swimmer gets it, of course, and brings it in triumph to shore.

The Varna people have a still more singular salt-water custom on the same day. After dark at night, all the newly-married men in the town are conducted, with bands of music and singing, to the shore, and made to take three successive plunges into the icy water.

They are then conducted home, where their brides, accompanied by their relatives and friends, have been awaiting them in state. After this there is feasting and merry-making. These singular customs are believed to be derived from a pagan origin.

OUR EXCHANGES.—There are many things too valuable in themselves to barter for money, but which money will be honored by subserving. Health is one of them. It may be sacrificed at the shrine of gold, but wealth thus purchased corrodes in the hand of him who holds it. Love may be cast aside and killed by neglect in the hot chase for fortune, but no riches, however great, can buy it back again. Honor, truth, and principle may be sold for money, but the wealth of the Indies cannot restore them. Let us, then, learn wisdom in all our exchanges.

We regret our folly when we have been induced to pay more for some article than it is worth, and so have made what we call a poor bargain; but no bargain can be so poor as that which men voluntarily make when they part with their most priceless possessions without stint for a handful of gold.

How many think to atone for the evil they have done by the good they intend to do, and are only virtuous in the prospective!

Scientific and Useful.

THE DEEP SEA.—A new lead for deep-sea sounding carries a cartridge which explodes on touching the bottom. A submerged microphone receives the sound, and the depth is estimated from the time occupied by the lead in sinking.

A STEEL HOUSE.—An English motor car manufacturer is building a two-story steel house to run on wheels, propelled by a motor under it. The top of the house is collapsible, so as to enable the house to pass under bridges.

CYCLE HOOKS.—In some parts an excellent innovation has recently been made, with a view of pleasantly transporting the cyclist to the roads where the pleasure of a day's outing begins. The street cars are provided with exterior hooks, on which cyclists may hang their wheels. The plan is a great success, and is an accommodation greatly appreciated by all lovers of the wheel.

LINENOID.—Pleasure boats and canoes are being manufactured with a new material, the base of which is linen, whence the boats have been designated "linenoid." The material is softened into a pulp, and this is shaped over a form and waterproofed. Being of one piece, there are, of course, no seams, and the material is stated to be of a consistency and flexibility resembling brass. Ash and oak are employed for keel, gunwale, and seats, supports, floor boards, and other wood fittings, and brass is the only metal used for fastenings. The seats are supported on ash ribs, bearing on the keel and gunwale only, thus keeping any strain from being put upon the shell.

THE THERMOGEN.—A new invention, called by its inventor the thermogen, consists of a quilt containing a coil of wire bent in the fashion of a gridiron, enclosed in insulating and non-conducting material, and embedded in cotton wool or other soft substance with a silk or woollen covering. The resistance offered by the coil to the flow of an electric current through the wire produces heat in the same way that heat and eventually light are produced in the filament of the glow lamp. A uniform temperature of about 150 degrees Fahrenheit is thus maintained; but, in the event of the temperature rising beyond that point from increase of pressure in the electric mains, a fuse instantly melts and automatically shuts off the current. The quilt may be readily attached to ordinary incandescent lamp terminals.

Farm and Garden.

THE LAND.—The production of maps to give the farmer useful indications on the physical and chemical qualities of land, so that he may know how to improve it, and what manures to apply, etc., has been proposed in France.

STUMPS AND STONES.—It is cheaper and better to get the straggling stumps and stones out of the fields than to attempt to work around them with the reaper, cultivator, mower or harrow. Many valuable implements are annually injured unexpectedly from stumps or stones.

TURNIPS.—A topping and tailing machine for turnips has been invented. The machine raises the turnips out of the ground, and by a simple and ingenious combination of mechanical appliances, removes the tops and tails from the turnips.

TREES.—When buying trees do not depend on the catalogues to help you in selections, but learn, if possible, which varieties will thrive best in your section. When a tree is planted and a mistake made, it may be years before the error can be discovered, when there will be not only a loss of time but of fruit, while disease may appear or the trees prove unprofitable. The first steps in tree planting are the most important, and especially in the selection of varieties.

BUTTER.—Butter that has a greasy appearance is not attractive in market, although it may be fresh and good. Too much working of the butter sometimes occurs. It is only necessary to get rid of the surplus water or milk, the grain to be retained as much as possible. It requires experience to fully understand when the butter is just right, but while some are careful in that respect the large majority seem inclined to work the butter longer than is necessary.

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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

ISSUED WEEKLY AT 726 SANSOM ST.

A. E. SMYTHE, Publisher.

PHILADELPHIA, OCTOBER 17, 1896.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

[IN ADVANCE.]

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On Concentration.

One of the results of the progress of civilization has been a marked tendency towards specialization. The day of the "general utility" man, as they say in theatrical circles, is fast disappearing, and it is becoming a matter of necessity to declare oneself as "heavy lead" or "low comedian," and to pursue one's career closely along the chosen lines. We need only take a very superficial glance around to see how true this is commercially.

So apparently simple an operation as the making of a pair of boots is a very different matter to-day from what it was fifty years ago. In by-gone times the shoemaker would select his skins, cut out his uppers and his soles, sew them together, and finish them, completing with his own hands the whole manufacture. Now one man buys the leather, another cuts out the uppers, another the linings, and another the soles; they are sewn by still another, and are put into yet fresh hands to be "finished."

Here and there the "general utility" shoemaker remains—in villages and country towns; but the commercial enterprise of our times does not really require him, and regards him only as a quaint and picturesque survival of an old-fashioned regime. The outcome of this—which has its parallel in all trades—is that not only are we able to manufacture more rapidly and more cheaply, but also that the workman has become more mechanical and less of an "artificer," as the term was formerly understood. He has, in a word, become less versatile, and less useful too, when considered as an individual, though his value as part of a vast comprehensive machine has been increased. That is to say, the gigantic organization of labor has been strengthened by modern developments and adjustments, but the laborer himself has been weakened and made dependent.

We get our boots on easier terms; but each man who does his little part in their manufacture finds it harder to rise to be a master of his craft than he did in the days when his skill and intelligence had to be exercised in turning out the finished article from its inception.

If this is true of manufacturing, it is equally true of many other walks of life. Ask a doctor, a lawyer, an engineer, an architect, or an accountant for advice respecting the adoption of his calling, and he will be almost sure to tell you that, in order to be successful, you must specialize. The men who come to the front nowadays are those who take up a special branch of their trade or profession, and to all outward appearances ignore the correlative branches.

"All round" men, in short, are becoming of less and less commercial value, though they are of course far from being altogether displaced. For ordinary ailments we are still content to consult the family practitioner; but, if our eyesight is bad or our hearing shows signs of failing, we are off at once to the experts, or, if that be quite beyond our pockets, to an eye or ear hospital.

And what is true of a particular pursuit is true also of general mental attainments. He who wishes to become a thinker and a man of culture cannot gain his end by one class of reading alone. The most ample knowledge of the history of our own country, and indeed of the world, must be accompanied by, say, a knowledge of economics before the learning can be made to serve the most useful ends. Even then one is far from having attained real culture, which may be called the understanding of facts, as learning is the possession of facts.

There are many faculties to be brought into play before a man arrives at culture. He may read poetry for the softening of the emotions, to obtain a spirit of sympathy for what is good and love for the beautiful—biography for understanding the causes and effects of human success and failure—fiction for gaining an insight into contemporary thought and phases of social life which perhaps he has no opportunity of studying at first-hand. And what can be better than the intelligent reading of books of travel for acquiring breadth of view, for understanding something not only of the varying characteristics of different lands, but also of the varying beliefs, aspirations, and tastes of different peoples?

What a lack of versatility there is among us, even at home, arising from the isolation of classes! How little do most of us understand of the ways of life of those outside the small circle that we call our friends, of the religious opinions of those who belong to a different sect from ourselves, of the political faith of those who ardently support the tenets of a party diametrically opposed to the one which claims all our enthusiasm!

How little does the sportsman, say, know of the joys of the literary man; and how little, generally speaking, is the literary man able to appreciate the enthusiasm of the sportsman! We cannot, of course, be omnivorous, and tastes must run partly in grooves by reason of our natural characteristics and limitations; but too often our views are sharply decided by our immediate surroundings.

So far from concentration and versatility being antagonistic, they must, we contend, be judiciously mated if great results are to be attained. As we have said, it is a principle in every walk of life that the highest is not to be achieved except by having a main pursuit—a life's work. On this our attention must be concentrated if we would rise above the dull level of mediocrity. Just as a river of noble proportions has one main stream and many tributaries, so we must gather in nutriment and interest from all the watersheds that lie along our course.

There are many grounds on which versatility should be aimed at. Its recreative value is enormous, for there is nothing more wearing than, nothing which so leads to staleness and a weakening of the brain-power as, the constant changeless following of a single aim. And, if versatility makes us more acceptable to ourselves, makes life more joyous and more full, it also makes us more acceptable to others.

To be versatile is to have the key to varied society. Often the trait is associated with conversational gifts and the much-to-be-desired faculty of being a good listener. The man of one idea is terribly restricted in his means of enjoyment. He must select his companions and his surroundings with the greatest care if he is not to be a bore and a victim to boredom. At the same time the merely shallow versatile man too often wearies of everything, and suffers from ennui because his interest is as evanescent as it is varied. But to act on the principle of one pursuit and many interests is to court a life full of pleasure and refreshing strength.

We need not wander about in search of subjects to study. They lie around us in inexhaustible profusion; and he who is a thinker and possesses the keynote to life will readily see how the most apparently trifling concerns fit into a general scheme. It is however impossible without reflection to extract the full value from life's multifarious interests; and, the more deeply we study one subject, the more readily shall we understand and see the meaning of others.

The lives of most of us are too narrow because we neglect these principles. We take a restricted view of life, and look upon even that superficially. To aim at knowing something of everything and everything of something is certainly a golden rule for those who would extract the richest honey from existence.

I DO not admire in a man the extreme of one virtue, as of valor, if I do not see at the same time the extreme of the opposite virtue, as in Epaminondas, who had the extreme of valor and the extreme of gentleness. For otherwise this character would not rise, but fall, by the excess of the one side. A man shows true gentleness, not by touching one extreme, but by touching both at once and filling up the interval.

THE words we so often carelessly use reflect a force in the mind that uses them; they are the messengers of the secret life of men to other men. Born of mental energy in one, they are mighty for good or ill in others. Guard therefore well the door of your lips. Weigh with care the words that may poison or bless for ever.

BUT there is a fatality, a feeling so irresistible and inevitable that it has the force of doom, which almost invariably compels human beings to linger around and haunt the spot where some great and marked event has given color to their life time, and still more irresistibly, the darker the tinge that saddens it.

WE must have a weak spot or two in a character before we can love it much. People that do not laugh or cry, or take more of anything than is good for them, or use anything but dictionary words, are admirable subjects for biographies. But we don't always care most for those flat pattern flowers that press best in the herbarium.

SUCH are the vicissitudes of the world, through all its parts, if at day and night, labor and rest, hurry and retirement, endear each other. Such are the changes that keep the mind in action; we desire, we pursue, we obtain, we are satisfied; we desire something else, and begin a new pursuit.

As long as promises are flippantly and plentifully made, without care or thought or judgment, so long will they be lightly and frequently broken. If they are to be kept with strictness and fidelity, they must be made with intelligence and circumspection.

TRUE courage is shown by doing without witnesses that which a man is capable of doing in the face of the world. In the former case, it is certain that ostentation has no share in the effort.

OBSTACLES which seem to hinder our course afford the best opportunities for developing the courage and accumulating the power which we need to pursue it.

FROM this life, as from dungeon-bars, we look to the skies, and are refreshed with sweet visions of the home that shall be ours when we are free.

EVERY day is a little life, and our whole life is but a day repeated. Those therefore that dare lose a day are dangerously prodigal.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENTS.

E. E. S.—Purl, in knitting, means an inversion of stitches, which gives to the work a ribbed or waved appearance.

L. V. W.—Courtesy requires that the gentleman escort be invited in after the evening entertainment, if the hour be not too late.

N. J. P.—A lute is a musical instrument of the guitar species, formerly in general use, but long superseded by the harp and guitar. It is supposed to be of Eastern origin, and its invention has been ascribed to the Arabs.

DOLLIE.—The little white spots observable in the finger-nails are due to some subtle action of the blood. They sometimes disappear of themselves, but there is no known method of removing them. In reality they signify nothing, though generally supposed to denote gifts.

ANNIE.—The first hospital in America, was founded at Quebec by three nuns, in 1639. In 1717, the first hospital in the English colonies was opened at Boston for persons sick with contagious diseases. The first army hospital in America was established at Cambridge, Mass., June 17, 1775. It was placed under the charge of Dr. John Warren.

T. R. P.—If you possess a taste for music, your age will prove no drawback in learning to play either the piano or guitar. As you have a taste for the former instrument it would be advisable to put yourself in the hands of a competent instructor, and in a reasonable time, with the slight knowledge you possess at present of the instrument, you will doubtless become a good performer.

LETTIE.—Olla-podrida (pronounced ol-la-po dre-da) is a Spanish national dish, consisting of several kinds of meat cut up into small pieces, and stewed with a variety of vegetables. The dish is a great favorite with the poor, and is kept so long that its odor and flavor become highly offensive. It is commonly used like pot pourri (pronounced po-poor-ee) metaphorically to denote a medley.

E. H. A.—Ox gall, the bile of the ox, is a viscid green or greenish yellow fluid, of bitter and slightly sweetish taste, found chiefly in a membranous bag in the ox. It is sometimes very limpid and at other times like a syrup. It is the properties which it possesses which render it of value to the arts, for it dissolves greasy matters on ivory, and for cleansing woollen stuffs it is sometimes preferred to soap. It is much used by artists on account of its combining with colors and increasing their lustre.

H. H. R.—Balsam of Tolu is a stimulant tonic, with a peculiar tendency to the pulmonary organs. It is given with some advantage in chronic catarrh and other pectoral complaints in which a gently stimulating expectorant is demanded; but should not be prescribed until after the reduction of inflammatory action. Its agreeable flavor renders it a popular ingredient in expectorant mixtures. The balsam is procured by making incisions into the trunk of the tree.

EASTBOURNE.—"Over fork over" is a very appropriate motto for some Scotchmen. It is borne by the family of the Earl of Glencairn, and is explained by the legend of some ancestor of the Earl's, who founded the family, finding a traitor fugitive concealed in a barn beneath the hay. When others would have passed, and let the wretch escape, the canny Scot cried out, "Over fork over!" and thus unearthed, or rather unhayed him. For this service the motto was assigned him.

F. C. C.—Ghee is a kind of butter used in many parts of India, prepared generally from the milk of buffaloes. The milk is successively boiled, cooled, and mixed with a little curdled milk. The process is completed by churning the curdled mass, to which some hot water is once added. It is an article of commerce in India, but unpalatable to Europeans from its strong smell and flavor. It is said that it may be kept from rancidity by boiling until all the water is evaporated, and then adding curdled milk and salt, and preserving it in close jars. It is pronounced ge.

FRANK.—In one sense, your criticism is just. If a woman was a widow at the time of her death, her husband, of course, must have died before she did. But the words, "the late," in such a case as the one you mention, signify something more than the mere fact that the widow's husband was dead. They also signify that he had died within a comparatively recent period. In the case of a woman who had lost her husband when she was twenty-five or thirty years old, and had lived a widow for forty or fifty years, no one would speak of her as the widow of "the late" John Jones. But if her husband had preceded her to the grave within a brief period, the words "the late" would be used to indicate that fact.

ELLA V.—There are several kinds of roses in the United States, among which are the prairie rose, blooming in July, from which some of the cultivated double pink roses have come; the dwarf rose, which blooms from May to July; the swamp rose, found generally in damp ground, and which blooms from June to September, and the early white roses. The prairie rose, unlike any other native species, has its pistils united in a column and projecting beyond the calyx tube. The tea or tea-scented roses are from a variety of the China rose. They have long buds, semi-double flowers, and a fragrance resembling that of green tea. The first moss rose was introduced into England from Holland in 1596. The yellow rose came from Persia, the musk rose Persia, China, or India, the cabbage rose from the Caucasus Mountains, and the damask rose from Damascus.

DAY DREAMS.

BY S. J.

Only a dream—yet the dream was sweet!
Only a vision, fleeting and fair,
Of a life once lonely and incomplete,
Made suddenly happy beyond compare—

Of a heart once troubled and tried with pain,
Hands that were weary and feet that were sore—
They should never be sad and tired again—
They should dwell in the shadows of grief no more!

For earth had grown bright with the beautiful light
Of a love that was noble and earnest and true;
And the kindred souls were dowered with strength
To begin the battle of Life anew.

Only a dream, and it died in its youth;
For Love may be slighted and Hope despised;
But in Heaven I know we shall learn the truth,
And our dreams shall be more than realized.

The Curse of Mahendra.

BY R. S.

"WELL, old fellow, so you're off at last! Good luck to you! May you bring back the biggest tusk of the rascalliest old rogue elephant that ever burdened mother-earth."

"My blessing with you, Reid. Lucky dog! I only wish I had a chance of putting a ball into the monster's carcase. Great Scot! what wouldn't I give to be you, instead of sweltering here in this confounded hole."

"I wish with all my heart you could join me, Stewart; but cheer up, old fellow, your turn will come next," answered the subject of these vehement valedictions—a young civilian, tall, dark and well knit together—as he passed quickly out of the mess-bungalow of the 91st M.N.I., followed by several men anxious to speed his departure on a shooting expedition among the jungles of the Western Ghauts of Southern India.

"Look out, as it's your first elephant hunt, Reid. Remember what I told you; the brutes are ticklish sport. Aim right in the centre of the forehead with steady hand and clear head, about fifteen paces off if possible.

"Should you miss, put a ball in the hollow of the eye with your second barrel; if that misses, sauve qui peut. That's my last word of advice," quoth the major, the old shikari of the party. "You bring to mind my first shot——"

As the worthy man was deemed to be prolix over his well-known narratives, he was summarily interrupted by the discordant voices of several irreverent youngsters, giving their equally valuable hints and admonitions, mingled with many despairing groans at the irony of an indiscriminating fate, which doomed them to hateful musketry practice on the sultry plains.

Among the turmoil of voices, Reid was calmly superintending the bestowal of some few remaining traps and packages in the dark recesses of the bullock cart, and after some necessary directions to his boy, Runghiah, an olive-brown sinister-expressioned Tamil, he himself finally disappeared into its mysterious depths.

With a last grip of the hand nearest to him, a hearty farewell cheer from the younger men, a series of unearthly sounds from the native driver, a flick of the huge whip, a twist to each of the bullocks' tails, as the lumbering vehicle crawled slowly out of the mess-compound, the young man at length set off on his night journey to the foot of the distant Western Ghauts, outlined clear and dark against the deep blue vault of the starry sky.

The moon was just rising, and the vivid silver light fell on the rustling palmyra groves, the massive mango topes, the slender cocoa-nut palms, the broad expanse of paddy-fields and the yellow stretches of sand extending in a series of arid undulations to the mountain range.

As he leant out of the door of his primitive conveyance, finishing his cheroot before finally composing himself for a few hours' sleep, Reid smiled to himself with a half-boyish grin of self-satisfaction, as he watched the fast disappearing lights of the little station of Manapatti.

At last he was on the eve of the realization of one of his fondest dreams. At last he was to take part in an elephant hunt, and all the true native ardor for sport seemed to possess his soul.

Fortunate fellow! Gifford Reid was indeed what may be termed lucky; he had very little to complain of, very few wishes ungratified. A spoilt child of fortune, very tender were the rose leaves that had as yet ruffled his pathway.

At the top of the list when he passed out for the Civil Service, with interest at home and in India, from the commencement of his career he had been placed at good stations, and told every day in the week he was on the high road to splendid appointments, as soon as some few years of service had passed over his head. He was, moreover, engaged to a sweet girl in old England—what could he want more?

Besides, he was hard-working, with a true love for his profession, and had just published a manual on Indian law which had taken the Presidency by storm, and had even been permitted by Government to be entered among the sacred departmental archives.

It was anent this book he owed the prospect of the purposed shooting expedition. Constant work and hard study had told upon him, and when the last corrected proof had been sent to the printers, he had applied for a month's leave to the Western Ghauts.

Nothing to me is more strangely weird than a night's journey in a bullock bandy along the silent Indian roads, through the sleepy Hindu villages, with their roused howling, pariah dogs holding concert with the barks of the prowling jackals.

Jogging slowly under the spreading branches of the grotesque banyan trees, arched across the path and throwing ghostly shadows among the quivering lights; passing the wayside chutrams, with the fires lighted by wandering beggars and benighted travelers still smouldering among the ashes; ever and anon catching glimpses of the time-worn temples, standing out in the moonlight gray and ghostly, with their shapely pillars, ornate carvings and dusky impenetrable depths of shade; skirting the wide silvery expanse of brimming tanks, gleaming in the moonlight, and crossing now and again some mighty river, flowing peacefully to the sea.

It is a wonderful scene; an uncanny and creepy feeling steals over one as the intervals of silence are broken by the rasping croak of the bull-frog or the shrill cry of the night-hawk.

Reid may not have been influenced in the same way, or perhaps not much given to sentiment. He was not in the humor for moonlight musings, for he soon turned his back upon the prospect, lay full length on his mattress, and was in a few moments in the land of happy dreams.

Just as the dawn was breaking in the east, with that sudden and brilliant glow peculiar to India, the bullock cart rumbled into the street of the native village at the foot of the Ghauts, a violent twist of the tails exciting the patient animals into a last expiring effort of extraordinary activity.

The unwonted sharp trot and increased shaking of the country-made springs roused Reid from his slumbers, and he awoke just as his native servant appeared at the door for orders.

They had pulled up at the house of the head man of the district, who, under commands from the collector, was to find the necessary coolies to carry the tonjon (a covered chair) and the baggage up the pass.

A loud call brought several dark forms to the front, among them the Tahsildar himself, salaaming and declaring all was ready as the sahib had ordered.

"Would the sahib partake of a little coffee before starting?"

Sipping the welcome beverage as he sat in a solitary chair placed in the low verandah, Reid watched, in the cool grey light of the morning, the preparations for his transit up the precipitous mountain paths to the coffee plantation to which he was bound.

Some score of nearly naked men swarmed round, gesticulating and jabbering over the distribution of the loads, while the indefatigable Runghiah of evil countenance arranged matters to his own satisfaction and his master's welfare with authoritative serenity and quiet activity.

For methodical management, attention to essential details, and minute observance to the personal comfort of his employer, there is no servant under the sun of any clime or nation equal to a first-class native boy. He is a factotum, valet, caterer, chef de cuisine, butler and steward, all in one. Without him India is a desert.

In a quarter of an hour the little body of men was under way; the tanjon bearers singing their wild characteristic rhyme in time to the stereotyped jog-trot march along the paddy bunds leading to the Ghauts, towering purple, mist covered above them, their lofty summits gold-glinted in the rays of the rising sun.

The path soon began to ascend by the banks of a small rushing stream, nearly hidden in a thick jungle of oleanders and tropical undergrowth.

Very beautiful are these Western Ghauts, extending far south to Cape Comorin, and rearing their massive crowns in precipitous buttresses of jungle-covered rock to the height of some 4,000 or 5,000 feet.

Deeply indented with picturesque ravines, down which thunders many a mountain torrent; thickly clothed with magnificent primeval forests, the haunt of the elephant, tiger, wild boar, deer, and smaller game, they present an ideal paradise to the hunter; and it was with a sigh of pleasant anticipation Reid, as he ascended higher and higher, viewed the scenes of what he trusted would prove his future deeds of prowess.

Four hours' continuous climb, through increasingly wilder and more beautiful scenery, brought him to the shoulder of the pass, where the road began the descent into the Travancore district, and entered the first coffee clearing, on which was situated the bungalow of Reid's friend.

Some few hundred feet below, it stood out in the distance, built on a spur of the hills, with huge precipices bounding it at back, and an extensive view of mountain, forest, and gorge in front, stretching far away to a silver line on the horizon—the gleam of the Indian Ocean.

A hearty welcome from the Scotch planter and a breakfast fit for the gods, or better still a hungry man, ravenous from inhaling the keen mountain air, awaited Reid's arrival, and after doing justice to the repast and giving the last station gup, he commenced plying his host with questions relative to the object of his visit.

"Come here," said the coffee-planter, Graham by name, stepping outside the rough but cosy sitting-room on to the verandah.

"I'll show you in a trice what you are to expect. Look there," pointing to a small forest clearing some hundred feet below them down the nearest gorge, "that's my new bit of coffee planting this season; two nights ago a band of elephants broke through the jungle and killed two coolies. I can't get a soul to go down there now. The brutes up-rooted the freshly-planted bushes, and played Old Harry all round. We'd better organize a shooting party in that direction, and some fellows are coming to tiffin to-day to talk it over with you."

"What's the name of the peak to your left, Graham? What a great mass of rock and forest it is, towering over the rest like a monarch!" and Reid designated with his hand a magnificent mountain almost facing him, whose picturesque, clear-cut form was outlined against the deep cobalt of the sky.

The sun, though high, had not penetrated the dark forest covered ravines and gorges indenting its massive shoulders, and they showed in dark purple furrows down the precipitous sides many thousand feet to the deep valleys below. In shape and size it dwarfed the surrounding hills.

"That's Mahendragheri, or the Mother of the Mountains, the sacred mountain of the hill tribes. No European has, as yet, set foot in its forest recesses, or scaled its rocky heights.

"The jungle is too impenetrable and the precipices too stiff. Besides, the hill men put every obstacle in the way of getting there if they can. There's a good deal of native superstition and folk-lore mixed up up with it.

"As far as I can gather, the Mother of the Mountains is, from all accounts, a most malignant old lady, and pursues with her curse any unfortunate who presumes to intrude on her domain.

"All I can vouch for from my own knowledge is, that I and some other fellows have twice set off determined to hunt on those forbidden grounds and ill-luck has attended us on both occasions."

"You don't surely attribute your misfortunes to the natives' gross superstitions?" asked Reid with evident scorn.

"Not certainly as the cause of the effect. I only insinuate that when Bond broke his leg by a nasty fall on the first day of our expedition, necessitating an immediate return to send him post haste down to the plains: and when I had to come back quicker than I went on our second trial, to find my drying sheds nearly burnt to the ground, there is something in these coincidences to give color to the native tradition, that no stranger puts foot on Mahendra with impunity. Naturally our disasters were nuts to the aborigines."

"Are elephants there too?" questioned Reid, scanning the scene attentively.

"It's their stronghold, but they are held sacred also. One must get leave from the Travancore Rajah any way to shoot them on this side of the Ghauts, and he rarely vouchsafes it. I have, however, a standing order, owing to their depredations and the danger to the coolies and tapal men traveling from here to Travancore.

"If any invade my territory or are on the main roads I have permission to dispatch them if I can. There's an old rogue-elephant that comes down from Mahendra. I have a heavy score against him, but it would be a brave man to follow his tracks into those unknown jungles over there; besides," added Graham with a slight smile, "the natives call him 'Shaitan,' Satan."

The conversation then turned on other matters, the merits of guns, balls and various accoutrements dear to every shikari's heart. Some days passed quickly and happily enough, but no elephant fell to the guns of Reid and his friends, though every morning brought tidings of fresh depredations committed by the huge beasts.

Awe stricken coolies related, in excited tones, how one man after another had been attacked and killed by the much dreaded rogue-elephant, who appeared to vanish into thin air when the enthusiastic hunters were put upon his track. The continued recital of this monster's misdeeds excited Reid intensely.

He swore "that cursed brute should give up the ghost from a shot from his express."

Graham only shook his head gravely. He was a quiet staid man, a strict Presbyterian; he looked rather scandalized at his companion's vehemence.

One day better luck attended the party; a small female elephant fell to Reid's rifle, and he was thereby rendered much elated.

There was so much of honest boyish enthusiasm and eager excitement about him, that the soberer members of the expedition felt drawn towards him, as to a younger brother fresh from school.

It was delightful to these hard-worked men, living for the greater part of the year lonely and isolated lives, to meet with a spirit so untrammelled by worldly care, throwing off so completely the thraldom of office and appearing so little spoilt by the adoration of society.

Reid was always the favorite in every station he entered, where his modest and straightforward character and brilliant abilities endeared him to all.

He had many sterling virtues, counterbalanced by fewer faults than most men; chief among the latter was a rather headstrong determination united to a nervous excitability often verging on passion.

Moreover the intense study of laws during the past months spent on the plains during the hottest season of the year, with a touch of fever towards the close, had told upon him more than he was aware, and this leave to the hills was as the balm of Gilead to his jaded brain and body.

Towards the end of the third week, when two more elephants, with many smaller heads of game, had made up a goodly bag, the foreman of the estate, a dark, wiry-limbed Tamil, presented himself in the early morning as Graham and his friends were enjoying their chota hazari in the cool shade of the verandah prior to arranging their plans for the day.

With a lugubrious countenance the man demanded an interview with his master. Graham stepped aside and after some minutes of earnest conversation came back slowly, with his long Scotch face perceptibly graver and more anxious.

"No bad news, I hope?" queried Reid.

"They are queer creatures, these natives," returned Graham, sitting down to his unfinished cup of chocolate.

"One never knows when their keen susceptibilities will be offended, and often the very thing one imagines is being done for their benefit they will calmly tell you is bringing untold horrors upon them. That's why no European treatment will ever efface cholera; their prejudices are so great, they would rather die than owe their lives to our drugs or our doctors.

"At all events, I despair of seeing any improvement or signs of enlightened civilization among these hill-men. What do you think Moses, though he professes Christianity, has just told me? It appears that rogue-elephant has been at his pranks again.

"I was in hope he had retired to his native fastnesses in the heart of Mahendra, but he took a short nocturnal walk last night down the Travancore Ghaut, met

our poor tapal man ascending with the bag, seized him, mauled the poor wretch out of all recognition and returned to the jungle, where his tracks can be seen making back to his haunts in the sacred mountain. The tapal man's son was with him and providentially escaped. He brought the news but not our letters; they are scattered, I fear beyond recovery, at the scene of the catastrophe.

"But here's the queer part. Moses solemnly affirms that in his opinion and the coolies', all the past disasters and this crowning misfortune are laid to our door! We, my dear fellow, have brought these calamities upon these innocent victims by our indiscriminate slaughter of the herd of sacred elephants.

"You, above all, Reid, by your irreverent manner of talking of Mahendra, and your known blood-thirstiness against the holy animals, have incurred the wrath of the Great Spirit of the Mountain.

"The natives are fully determined this rogue elephant is the devil himself let loose upon our devoted heads, as a punishment for our blasphemy.

Moses summed up his indictment by gravely asking me if you could not be persuaded to return sooner to the plains so as to avert further misfortunes."

The absurdity of the idea made both men laugh.

"Instead of departing earlier I'll employ the short time that remains to me in hunting up this evil monster and making him pay the just penalty for his crimes.

"Come, Graham, stir your stumps, old man, and give directions for beaters at once. I'll see to the rifles and will be ready as soon as you are."

With excited voice and gesture, Reid rose preparatory to going to his room. Graham placed his hand on the young man's arm.

"It's no use, my dear fellow, you'll not get a hill-man to follow you. If I could make up a party I'd do so with pleasure. In the meanwhile I have already sent some coolies down the ghaut for the poor fellows remains.

"They'll be back by tiffin time, and we shall hear in which direction the rogue has made tracks; he is, by now, twenty or thirty miles above, in the heart of the jungles of Mahendra, where I, for one, decline to follow him. Living amongst the natives as I do I never run counter to their prejudices more than I can help.

"Besides, without the aid of the hill-men, whose superstitious fears are just now greatly excited, it would be impossible to attempt the expedition. They alone know the land-marks and beaten tracks through the jungle."

"I declare, to hear you talk, Graham, you might have changed places with my boy, Runghiah, who is the most bigoted heathen alive," answered Reid with ill-concealed impatience. "He has been inwardly cursing me, I am positive, for every shot I have fired and has done poojah to Satan ever since his arrival here. And if you believe in the power of the evil eye, you watch him when I inveigh against elephants. He positively glares at me. But this is all rot, not following up those tracks!

"Look here, Graham, if you are so confoundedly particular about hurting their feelings, I'll take the responsibility of tackling these fellows, and see if a little bribery and corruption will not make them change their minds. Surely, the death of this brute is more to be desired than a repetition of this morning's slaughter.

"I certainly consider that in the cause of humanity the rogue should be dispatched as expeditously as possible. Should I be able to collect a sufficient number of coolies, you will not stand in my way if I go alone?"

"No," replied the planter doubtfully. "I cannot, of course, coerce your movements, I can only give you my view of the matter as my experience dictates. However, you'll not get a man to go with you, I am confident."

Contrary, however, to Graham's expectations, and to his undisguised surprise—by what persuasions and golden keys he never discovered—in half an hour's time Reid appeared with his scratch troop of guides and beaters, fully equipped for the expedition.

The young man had recovered his temper and good spirits. He laughingly asked Graham to congratulate him and wish him good luck.

"I wish you a safe return," answered the Scotchman with some gravity. "Don't be fool-hardy, and follow the hill-men's directions implicitly, is my last word of advice."

"Runghiah comes with me. He understands their lingo, so I can't go wrong. Ta-ta, old man! Here's death to the sacred elephant of Mahendra, to the old rogue of a Shaitan."

As the words passed the young civilian's lips, Graham happened to catch the transient expression on the face of Reid's native servant. His whole countenance was disfigured by a look of concentrated hatred and heathen fanaticism, as his sinister, deep-set eyes rested on his master with a fierce vindictive glare.

Feeling Graham's gaze directed towards himself the man's habitual reserved suavity of manner instantly returned, but that fleeting glimpse had revealed to Graham the innermost recesses of an evil and revengeful spirit.

He felt inclined to draw Reid aside and warn him—of what? A moment's thought showed how slight were his grounds for any tangible suspicion, and, moreover, while he debated the opportunity was lost.

Reid, with impatient stride, was already some way down the road towards the spur that connected their side of the valley with the stupendous mountain opposite.

With a strange foreboding of evil, Graham turned back into his bungalow, where he remained writing letters for the homeward mail till roused by the return of his foreman, who had headed the party to recover the corpse of the tapal man.

The native entered slowly and after salaaming said in a low concentrated voice:

"Is it true, sahib, that Reid Sahib done gone to Mahendragheri?"

"True that he has gone towards the mountain, but many things may turn him back from venturing far, Moses," returned Graham in measured accents.

The Tamil clasped his thin, nervous hands with a gesture of despair.

"Why Master Sahib let young master go? See, Graham Sahib, I tell you true. The curse of Mahendra will be upon him. She will hear no strange foot upon her mountain. He will die, that brave young sahib! Even if he killed the sacred elephant. He only kill the body. The Shaitan will still follow him. As the elephant dies, so will he himself die. I have said."

"How you, a Christian, can talk such utter bosh surpasses my understanding. I am ashamed of you, Moses!" ejaculated Graham with severity.

"See, sahib," returned the foreman respectfully, but with quiet decision, "the missionary sahibs they persuade one, two, three, maybe ten men to serve Christian God, one in this village, one in that.

"They teach them God is good, all sin bad, Christian God very strong, Satan very weak, very much afraid; but, think you, sahib, because those few men do Christian worship among all thousand, thousand heathen round all, bad has become good—that the Shaitans are frightend away by those ten men?

"I am a Christian true, Graham Sahib, and I pray Christian God, but Satan of the heathen are still here. The Shaitan of Mahendra will not go for me, nor for twenty missionary sahibs. It is as strong as death and as cruel as sin!"

The man spoke with repressed vehemence and honest conviction.

His master did not answer. Long experience warned him futile was argument against the most deep-rooted superstitions of the natives, who through long ages of darkness, from generation to generation, have been in bondage to the powers of evil. Besides, the astute Tamil's crude theory after all hit the right nail on the head.

A few conversions here and there would never uplift the pall of heathen ignorance or lessen the gross abominable vice with which the Indian races are imbued.

Too truly had Moses attested to the presence of Satan and all his works still presiding in their midst. The Shaitan had not been dislodged from his fastnesses; he had not even been shaken.

The long tropical day dragged on slowly to its close; the dark blue shadows deepened in the valleys and crept up the mountain sides; the distant ranges glowed in a crimson haze, while the western horizon shimmered in golden flame.

Graham stood anxiously watching for some sign of the hunting party. At his desire the overseer had gone down the mountain to the connecting spur, to render assistance if necessary, some coolies accompanying him with refreshments and torches.

But as yet there was no sign nor sound of human voice.

If returning triumphant, far down the ghaut and across the precipitous gorge would be wafted the cheerful song of the Tamils and the wild, weird hunting chant of the hill-men.

The sunlight faded; the intense blue-gray twilight, peculiar to those regions, descended on the cold, clearly-defined forms of the higher mountains, leaving the lower depths in impenetrable shadow. Soon night had thrown her sable mantle over the whole scene.

Graham at midnight gave up hope of his friend's return till the morrow.

At early dawn, after reckless, broken sleep, he set out down the path to Mahendragheri accompanied by Moses and some coolies, who had returned overnight with no tidings of the hunting party.

For some distance they walked rapidly through the cleared portion of the coffee estate, and then entered the beautiful forest, clothing all the available points of vantage on the gigantic precipices.

Graham was too occupied with anxious thoughts to give much attention to the scene around him, yet it was fair enough to merit more than a passing glance.

Lovely ferns, rare orchids, and luxuriant creepers lined the rock-bound way, while overhead the thick and varied foliage of grand old monarchs of the woods threw a grateful shade on the steep and rugged path below.

A trickling, murmuring stream often crossed the road, tumbling down the rocks to join the main torrent, rushing madly over its boulder-strewn bed in the cool, purple depths of the gorge far down the ghaut, its sullen roar often striking on the ear.

In about two hours the spur was crossed to the opposite side, and Graham stood on the outlying flank of the great sacred mountain.

He was still, however, on a well-beaten track to some coffee plantations on the further side of the ravine, but it was not till after another hour's further trudge that he came across signs of the divergence of the hunting party from the main road.

Here and there, at longer and shorter intervals, appeared abundant signs of the proximity of elephants; their well beaten tracks through gigantic elephant grass were evident on all sides, leading from the heart of the mountain to the ravine below.

It was one of these Reid had followed, according to the opinion of the hill-men. With the same unerring sagacity of the North American Indian they can track man and beast through the pathless jungles.

Graham and his coolies halloed and coo-ee'd to attract attention. The forest rang with their shouts, and the echoes resounded clear and sharp from one precipice to another.

"If he's living he must hear and call back," muttered the Scotchman.

But, as of old to the worshippers of Baal, there was neither speech nor language, nor any that answered.

Just as Graham was debating the advisability of running counter to the openly expressed terror of the natives and ascending the mountain in search of his friend, a long-drawn distant cry broke upon his ear.

With might and main he answered back, and strode rapidly in the direction of the voice on one of the beaten elephant tracks leading steeply up into the thickest jungle of Mahendra, followed at a lagging distance by his half-hearted crew.

In a short time, tearing down the precipitous path in hot haste, consternation and distress depicted upon his countenance, appeared one of the hill-men who had elected to follow Reid. His story was soon told.

"The sahib had shot the rogue-elephant with his own hand right through the forehead, there," and the native put his finger to the centre of his black, perspiring brow. "The huge beast had sunk down, dead as a stone; but as they ran up to the sahib he too had fallen down.

"Runghiah and the coolies were now carrying him through the jungle. He did not know for certain if the sahib was dead. He was white—no white. He looked like death. It was the Shaitan of Mahendra who had struck him down in vengeance for his slaughter of the sacred elephant."

It appeared, on further inquiry, that the day before Reid had tracked the brute far up into the recesses of the forest, and, losing the trail at dusk, had encamped on the mountain for the night. Early in the morning he had resumed the hunt, and had met with his enemy above the jungle, among the coarse thick grass clothing the summit of the mountain.

As Graham listened to this recital numerous footsteps heralded the approach of the rest of the party.

Borne on the shoulders of the natives was the prostrate body of Gifford Reid, followed by Runghiah, whose face wore an expression of vindictive exultation.

The planter glanced at him suspiciously, and then at his master, who, at first sight, appeared lifeless.

A hasty inspection proved that he was still breathing, though whether suffering from a faint, a hurt, or sunstroke, Graham was unable to ascertain. He rapidly made up an improvised hurdle, placed the unconscious man upon it, and hurriedly turned his steps homeward.

Reid, under rough but effacious treatment, soon regained his senses, and declared his belief that as soon as he had shot the elephant, seeing his aim had taken effect, he had sprung forward into the open under the full rays of the blazing sun, and felt himself struck down on the instant by them.

He appeared nervously anxious to verify and reiterate this version of his story, and strange to say, showed none of that natural elation at accomplishing the object of his expedition as might have been expected.

He did not even bemoan the abandonment of the valuable tusks, as the coolies could not be induced to return for them.

Thus the defunct monarch of Mahendra was left to rot, a prey to wild beasts and myriad ants.

After a day or two Reid professed himself well enough to descend the Ghauts to Manapatti, and Graham did not oppose his decision, deeming it best that he should obtain, without further delay, proper medical advice.

He was not, in fact, easy about his friend. Reid appeared to have received some severe mental shock. He was silent, depressed, and, for so bright and genial a spirit, even morose. The only topic of conversation with which he broke the monotony of silence was to repeat in low tones the history of the hunt.

"Look! I hit him there, Graham. Just as the major told me, straight and clean in the centre of his forehead. It was a grand shot! My hand never swerved, my eye never wavered! The ball went straight to the brain, Graham, straight as a die to the brain."

Once his friend detected him with his forefinger pressed firmly in the middle of his forehead—so firmly there was a perceptible red mark left as he drew it hastily away. He laughed uneasily.

"Do you know what my boy has just told me?' he asked in a quick, nervous manner. "He inquired with tender solicitude if I felt any pain here. And when I replied why the deuce I should feel a pain there or anywhere else, he answered with his usual sardonic grin:

"'Pardon, sahib, me very glad to hear master say that thing. The curse of Mahendra is there! No pain, then the Shaitan no hurt master!'

"I told him to hold his tongue, and not talk such folly. But afterwards I couldn't for the life of me resist asking about this dread curse, upon which he answered with solemn unction, 'Master hit the sacred elephant here,' touching his forehead. 'Where the elephant die, master have plenty pain! Master die, too!'

"That is the superstition, I believe," remarked Graham.

"All I can say is, and you may laugh at me as a fool, old man, ever since that idiot spoke I have had a pain there."

The Scotchman did not laugh. He felt assured that from the effects of undue exposure and excitement his friend was on the verge of a serious illness.

Fever, probably, was heralding its advent by these signs of mental aberration and hysterical fancies. The sooner he could get him down the ghaut the better, and without more ado he determined to set off then and there with his suffering guest.

Reid acquiesced without a demur. He seemed strangely subdued, and relapsed into silent moodiness.

The evening found both men on the plains, installed in the dark bungalow. Much to Graham's disgust, he found, even with the united efforts of the Tahsildar and his own foreman, there would be no chance of procuring a bullock bandy for two or three hours.

He was, perforce, obliged to possess his soul in patience, and bear the tedium of the delay as best he could.

After a hasty meal (at which Reid ate nothing), he went out into the verandah to watch for the promised vehicle.

The air of the inner room appeared stifling after the clear keen atmosphere of the hills. He could not, however, prevail on Reid to join him; and the conviction gained upon him that the poor fellow was rapidly getting worse, and felt too ill for any exertion.

Having made the invalid as comfortable as inadequate means permitted, and as his presence seemed to irritate him, the planter left him to his own thoughts and dreams silence in the dim dusk of the gathering night.

How long he sat wrapt in his own anxious musings—his ear strained to catch the sound of the expected conveyance, the time appearing interminably long and dreary—he never knew, but suddenly he was struck by the intense stillness of the inner room.

Once or twice before, at intervals, Reid had moved, coughed, heaved an audible sigh, and otherwise given tangible proofs of his presence; but now not a sound, not a movement disturbed the heavy waves of sultry air.

Once Runghiah had glided in, and returned to report, in passionless subdued accents, "Reid Sahib was sleeping—sleeping fast."

Beyond that interruption the sick man had been left undisturbed. Graham rose hastily with an undefined fear, and entering the whitewashed scantily-furnished room, passed quickly to the centre table at which sat Reid.

He was leaning back with his head resting against the high hard back of the wooden chair, his legs placed, crossing each other, on the edge of the table.

In the dim uncertain light his face looked drawn, gray, and very still. But on the up-turned forehead was a small round mark, from which trickled down, over the pallid skin a ghastly red stream, dyeing the white shirt beneath and falling drop by drop on the floor. As Graham touched the cold nerveless hand hanging down by the side, the terrible truth flashed upon him.

He called wildly for a light, and by its wavering rays he saw Gifford Reid was dead. Shot by his own hand through the brain by a little pocket revolver of small smooth bore and noiseless action.

It had fallen from the limp cold hand on to the matted floor.

The curse of Mahendra was accomplished! The Shaitan of the mountain had claimed his victim—or had Runghiah anything to do with it?

Who could tell?

Defence of the Alamo.

BY J. L. H.

IN the history of almost every nation, there are notable instances of heroism and self-sacrifice on the part of those who have risen in defence of their country in the hour of her greatest need. These men, generally drawn from all grades of life, have no claim to be regarded as other than volunteers, pure and simple.

They fought from no mercenary motive, nor even for the sake of renown, but from that stern sense of duty which alone can make men heroes in the truest meaning of the word.

Too often these gallant deeds are accorded no suitable recognition. The graves where the heroes lie are sometimes neglected; their memory is not cherished as it ought to be, and even the anniversary of their glorious exploit calls forth no grateful tribute from their fellow countrymen.

And yet if they had not stood, as it were in the breach, disaster and conquest would inevitably have followed.

Perhaps in no other instance it this more strikingly exemplified than in the case of the brave defenders of the Alamo fort during the Mexican invasion of Texas, in the earlier part of the present century. Never in the whole of American history, has there been a more glorious achievement, and but rarely one attended with greater results.

Yet, what is known of it now? How often is the incident referred to? Few even can tell the name of the indomitable commander, William Barrett Travis.

The story is well worth telling, for it affords another illustration—and a very striking one—of what a mere handful of resolute men can do, even when pitted against overwhelming odds.

Early in the year 1836, a force of two thousand Mexicans, under the fierce and brutal Santa Anna, raided Texas. Houston, the Texan leader, who made a brave stand against the invaders with his gallant little band, was overwhelmed by numbers, and driven back into the interior, losing most of his followers.

Meanwhile, the Mexicans had been reinforced, a fresh body of troops having crossed the frontier, so that Santa Anna could count upon five thousand strong. With this force, composed of men as fierce and lawless as himself, he advanced with all the confidence of a conqueror, pillaging as he went, and carrying destruction into the very heart of the country. He announced his intention of sweeping Texas from end to end.

In this critical state of affairs it became a matter of vital importance to hold the Mexican marauders in check, until Houston had time to rally his scattered followers, and take the field with an adequate force.

But how was this to be done? There was no regular organised force available, and to collect a sufficiently strong body of settlers, separated as they were by immense distances, involved a delay which would undoubtedly prove fatal. If Texas was to be saved, prompt and decisive measures must be taken.

It was then that the heroic Travis came to the front with his hundred and forty gallant volunteers. Incredible as it may seem, this devoted little band undertook the almost hopeless task of stemming the Mexican advance.

They took possession of the Alamo fort, determined to hold out to the last, even though it ended in their total extermination.

Their example seemed to be contagious. One morning, as they looked out across the plain, they beheld a small body of men advancing towards the fort.

The strangers proved to be thirty-two brave fellows from El Refugio, who had come to swell the little garrison. Their only other reinforcements that arrived consisted of the renowned David Crockett and two of his companions.

The total strength of the garrison amounted to only one hundred and seventy five, and against them five thousand Mexicans were advancing!

Still, in spite of these enormous odds, not a man flinched from the deadly struggle that was about to commence. They knew their country's fate was in their hands.

With such leaders as Travis, Crockett, and Bowie (of "bowie-knife" fame), the force shut up in that grimy little fort, small as their numbers were, was one not to be despised.

On the 23rd of February the Mexican troops appeared in sight, and halted within range of the fort. The impetuous Santa Anna, confident of his ability to carry the place by storm, lost no time in making the attempt.

But he had reckoned without his host; he was promptly repulsed with considerable loss, and deemed it expedient to get out of range of the deadly fire of those Texan riflemen.

Then the struggle commenced in downright earnestness—a struggle perhaps unparalleled in the history of warfare.

Five Mexican batteries were placed in position, and began to play upon the doomed fort, but the defenders knew how to handle their rifles, and picked off the gunners with unerring skill.

Santa Anna, mad with rage at being baffled by such an inferior force, made more than one desperate assault, but was driven back again and again.

With dogged obstinacy he stuck to the siege, determined to reduce the place at all hazards, and vowing vengeance on the defenders.

Day after day the attack was renewed, but still the garrison showed no signs of surrender. Hemmed in on all sides by their fierce assailants, the besieged fought on with unflinching courage.

In less than a week their deadly fire had brought down more than one thousand of the enemy. The ground around the fort was literally covered with the slain.

For twelve days the fight went on without interruption, and by the end of that time fully one-third of the whole Mexican force had been killed off. But the brave defenders had not escaped scot-free—far from it.

Their ranks were woefully thinned; many were already wounded, and to add to their sufferings, sickness and hunger began to prey upon them.

On the morning of the 6th of March, it was evident that the Mexicans meditated a combined attack upon the fort.

Santa Anna had resolved to hurl the whole of his remaining force against it, and carry it by sheer strength of numbers. He knew to what straits the garrison were now reduced, and hoped to succeed where he had so often failed.

Travis rallied his men for the last time. As he ran his eye over the remnant of his gallant band, and then looked out towards the thousands moving across the plain, he knew too well that the crisis had come, and that they could not expect to hold out against this fresh assault.

But no thought of capitulation seemed to have entered his mind; he announced his intention of dying behind the walls, and his comrades were determined to follow his example. In silence they betook themselves to the ramparts, there to await the expected attack.

The fighting that day was more fierce and stubborn than on any previous occasion. The defenders, though so reduced in numbers and weakened by the rigors of the siege, made a desperate stand.

The Mexicans first assailed the fort from the south, where their guns had done most damage; but at that point they were met by Travis himself, whose presence always seemed to inspire his comrades with renewed strength and courage.

Such was their determination and pluck, they succeeded in repelling the attack, and the Mexicans were once more repulsed with heavy loss.

But the brave defenders were not given much breathing time. The assault was renewed in less than an hour, the Mexican forces now surrounding the fort on every side.

They rushed to the attack with fierce yells, and fought with the fury of savages. The struggle was as brief as it was glorious.

Not until the greater numbers of the heroes who remained within the fort had been killed one by one, not until the immortal Travis had fallen dead upon the ramparts, did the assailants succeed in gaining a footing.

Even then, though only a dozen or two of the garrison remained alive, resistance was not at an end.

They fought manfully to the last, for most of them had promised their dead leader never to surrender, and they meant to keep their word.

The savage conquerors showed no mercy, even to the wounded. Bowie was lying in bed, suffering from sickness and injuries, when they broke in upon him with the intention of despatching him then and there.

But they caught a Tartar in the wiry little colonel, who, even in his enfeebled condition, stretched four of his assailants dead on the floor before he was slaughtered.

Crockett was one of the last to die. When they surrounded him, he fought with his clubbed rifle.

He and five others—all that remained of the Alamo defenders—stood back to back, and so fierce was their resistance, they actually kept their assailants at bay until the Mexicans were glad to offer them quarter.

They were led out from the fort and before Santa Anna. The Mexican leader regarded the heroes with looks of fierce exultation. They must have thought then, when it was too late, that it would have gone better with them if they had shared the fate of their comrades, rather than to have fallen into the hands of this tyrant.

Though the brave fellows had been promised quarter, they were led out from his presence and massacred in cold blood. The brutal instincts of the conqueror were not satisfied until he had mutilated the bodies of the slain.

So ended the siege of the Alamo. The noble defenders were exterminated, but Texas was saved, and to them the state owes its freedom and prosperity. Santa Anna marched away north, bent upon revenging his heavy losses.

But Houston, who subsequently gained for himself the proud title of "The Liberator of Texas," had made good use of his time, and was able to get together a sufficiently strong force to meet the invader.

He encountered the Mexicans at San Jacinto, where a fierce and bloody battle was fought. The invaders were defeated, and Santa Anna himself taken prisoner. The remnant of his scattered force retreated across the frontier, and Texas was free.

It is strange that the story of the Alamo should have been allowed to lapse into oblivion. Texas, at least, should honor the memory of those heroes, and point with pride to the spot where they made their gallant defence. The ancient Greeks or Romans would almost have deified such men.

England, France, or Germany would have raised a national memorial to them. In America they have only one monument. It stands upon the scene of their glorious death, and bears two lines of grand import:

Thermopylæ had its messenger of defeat;
The Alamo had none!

A GENEROUS mind, when it grants a favor, will do it with a grace.

At Home and Abroad.

The practical use of aluminum is extending in various parts of Europe. In Germany two corps of the army are equipped with aluminum, which includes chevrons and every article of metal usually carried on the person, even the buttons on the clothes and the pegs in the shoes. The sword bayonets, scabbards, etc., are also made of the new light metal. In Paris there is a cab made of aluminum, and in many of the races at Longchamps the horses were shod with aluminum. There are also several racing sulkies made of aluminum. It is only a short time ago that an Ohio firm built several duckboats of aluminum.

The Mayor of Boston, England, has brought an entirely new and original notion to bear on his dispensation of justice—courtesy compels me to call it justice. Last week one Taylor was brought up in custody charged with stealing a cat, and after hearing the evidence his Worship addressed the defendant as follows: "On paying the costs for the trouble you have given, 9s. 6d., you will be allowed to go. We are inclined to think that you did not steal the cat." So this worthy magistrate acquits the man of the charge, but punishes him for "the trouble" he has caused by being falsely accused! Could anything be fairer?

A number of officers were talking in the hall of the Army and Navy Club a day or two ago when the conversation turned on the care which is exercised in the selection of recruits for the army. From the facts brought out it would seem that the United States service is one of the hardest in the world to enter, even as a private. The standard of the enlisted man has been raised so often that it is now harder to become an ordinary soldier, with the pay of $14 a month, than it is to enter any branch of the civil service. The slightest defect in the applicant's physique is enough to debar him, as is also a bad moral character, even with a perfect physique. The average monthly enlistments for this year have been 500, while the average rejections were over 3,000.

When an animal dies in a menagerie it is not likely to be a total loss. The skin is usually of some value, and in the case of some animals as, for instance, the lion or the tiger, it may be of very considerable value. The value of any skin depends largely upon its condition, and its condition may determine whether the skin should be mounted as a rug or as a showpiece. The manner of mounting a skin might also be influenced in some measure by the state of the market at the moment. There might be a greater demand for rugs of the skin of some animals, or a greater demand for such animals mounted as showpieces. The menagerie owner sends the skin to the taxidermist and has it mounted, perhaps as a rug for his own use, or as an animal to be added to the menagerie museum, or to be sold as a rug or as a furrier's showpiece. In any event when an animal dies there is likely to be more or less salvage.

A taxidermist is thus quoted in a Washington paper: "Feathered as well as unfeathered bipeds take to dieting when a superfluity of adipose tissue makes them uncomfortable. The pokeberry is the chief weapon with which those knowing little creatures fight embonpoint. The larks and thrushes are the chief banters, and they follow the practice just after breeding time, when it is necessary for them to be active in order to secure food for their young ones. I have watched a thrush feed for a whole day just after she had hatched out a nestful of fledgelings, and during the twelve hours she ate nothing but the pokeberry. I do not know whether or not that part of humanity which suffers from too much fat took its 'tip' from the birds, but it is a fact that many of the anti-fat remedies contain an extract of pokeberry."

Catarrh Cannot be Cured

with LOCAL APPLICATIONS, as they cannot reach the seat of the disease. Catarrh is a blood or constitutional disease, and in order to cure it you must take internal remedies. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, and acts directly on the blood and mucous surfaces. Hall's Catarrh Cure is not a quack medicine. It was prescribed by one of the best physicians in this country for years, and is a regular prescription. It is composed of the best tonics known, combined with the best blood purifiers, acting directly on the mucous surfaces. The perfect combination of the two ingredients is what produces such wonderful results in curing catarrh. Send for testimonials free.

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Our Young Folks.

POLLY'S HOLIDAY.

BY S. P.

THERE was one perfectly happy girl in the court on Monday morning, and that girl was Polly Anderson.

What did it matter that breakfast had been scanty, and dinner by no means a certain prospect? Baby might be as cross as he pleased. It was Mrs. Higson's baby, and Polly got sixpence a week for taking care of him while Mrs. Higson went out charing.

He was never particularly good, but sixpences are not had for nothing, and Polly took the crossness as part of the day's work.

Work was play to-day, for this was Monday, and on Saturday, just five days hence, Polly was going to the country; going to say good-bye to the court and the baby, and all her troubles and trials, for a whole week, to wander about green fields and woods, and gather cowslips and envy nobody, not even the Princess of Wales.

Polly knew the princess by sight quite well, and had wished she could change places with her often, but that was before there was any mention of holidays.

She marshalled the baby and his brother Tommy, who was generally included in the baby's sixpence, to the piece of waste ground at the end of the court.

She wanted to tell Dicky Holt the good news. Dicky was a splendid listener; he never interrupted or wanted to talk about something else, like the other boys.

"I've never been in the country," he remarked when Polly had to pause to take breath.

"I have once," said Polly proudly. "And we're going to live in a fine house, and have little beds to sleep in, and plenty to eat, and swings, and no end of things."

"It's fine to be you," broke in an older girl.

"Isn't it?" laughed Polly. "And it was just a chance I got it, too. The lady was there talking to the teacher, and didn't I listen hard when I heard my name? I couldn't believe it was true."

"I wish they'd send me, too," said Dicky.

"I wish they would," returned Polly cheerfully. "I'll ask them if you like."

She felt quite benevolent to-day in her good fortune. Perhaps she hardly expected to be taken at her word, but Dicky did not understand that; his whole face had lighted up.

"Oh, Polly, will you? will you? I would give anything to go."

Dicky did not look as if he had much to give. Polly regarded him more soberly.

"It's not likely they would, Dicky; I only said I'd ask, you know."

"But ask hard, Polly. Tell them I've been ill. I've never been anywhere in my life, Polly."

Polly patted his curly head soothingly. She felt that politeness had led her into difficulties for once.

"I'll ask teacher to-morrow night," she said slowly; "but I wouldn't think about it if I were you, Dicky: I've had to wait years longer than you. When you're as big as me you'll be going to lots of places."

But Dicky couldn't look forward all those years; indeed, it was a little doubtful if he would ever reach them—something was wrong with his hip joint.

The idea of seeing the beautiful country had taken possession of his small mind; he kept close to Polly, reminding her of her promise, till over and over again before Tuesday evening came Polly wished she had had the sense to hold her tongue about it.

"You'll be sure and remember, Polly?" This was as Polly was putting on her hat for the class—the baby was safe in his own cradle for the night.

"Of course I'll remember," snapped Polly. "I've heard about nothing else the whole day."

"No, indeed, Polly, it is quite impossible," said Miss Stretton when, according to promise, Polly faltered out her request. "The house is completely full: there was but one bed, and you are to have that."

"I don't know how I shall have to tell him," ejaculated Polly. "Couldn't—couldn't one of the other children be made to wait a week or two, Miss Stretton?"

"Not after it had been promised them. You would not like that yourself, Polly. We can only just afford to take a certain number."

It was not easy to carry the report back. Polly went home by a longer road, to defer the sight of Dicky's waiting face.

"Polly, Polly, am I to go?" he cried out the moment she turned the corner.

Polly shook her head.

"It's no use. I said everything I could think of, but they haven't a bit of room. Dicky, don't——"

For Dicky's face was hidden in his hands. Polly stood looking at him with a troubled face.

There was only one way; to let him take her place, and Polly did not want to think of that. It meant giving up too much, it couldn't be right that she should—and then that same minute Polly knew that it had to be; she couldn't go away and be happy while Dicky was fretting his heart out behind. She had always liked Dicky, and he was not able to fight for himself.

"Dicky," she said, in quite an altered voice, "you shall have my place—you need it most. I am going back to the teacher now." And that was how Polly Anderson lost her holiday.

Saturday morning Dicky went off with his small face perfectly radiant, and Polly lugged the baby and Tommy over a mile to see the cab drive past to the station.

"It was all my own doing, and I don't know that I'm altogether sorry," she remarked to herself as she looked after the flying wheels; "but catch me telling a single person if I ever get another chance."

And Polly is altogether glad about it now, for that was the last time that Dicky ever needed a holiday.

THE TWINS' QUARREL.

BY M. P.

NOT a sound was to be heard in the nursery. There were two windows, and a little still form standing at each; backs turned to each other; faces averted. The twins had quarreled!

Such a dreadful quarrel it was—not just an ordinary little bickering, soon made up with hugs and kisses, but a real large quarrel.

This was how it came about.

A week ago had been their birthday, and amongst other presents they had each received a nice little black doll.

All had gone well until to-day. They had been playing with their dolls as usual, when suddenly Hughie had cried—

"My darkey-boy's dot more curls dan yours, Jackie."

Jackie carefully examined both black wooly heads, and decided the curls were alike on each.

Now the twins always had everything exactly the same, and Hughie became restless at the thought of his doll being in any way different from his brother's.

At last they agreed to try and pull one curl off Hughie's doll.

But, alas! Jackie pulled too hard One tug, and he held in his hand a beautiful black wig!

With a cry of anger Hughie seized his brother's doll, and flung it down on to the floor. Smash, and it lay in atoms!

Then Jackie lost his temper too, and, clutching at the hairless little black doll, threw it down beside his own.

The twins looked at each other in speechless anger, then both got up, and—oh, so dignified they were!—walked off to a window and turned their backs on each other.

Two pairs of naughty blue eyes gazed out at the sunny street. Gradually—perhaps it was the sunlight, perhaps it was their own soft little hearts—but gradually the eyes grew less angry, and the frowns began to disappear.

How silent the room was!

Hughie peeped over his shoulder, and there was Jackie just peeping over his. Both curly heads turned back to the windows.

All silent and still once more.

Then, somehow or other, there were more peeps, and the twins found themselves together. Hugs and squeezes, laughter and tears, forgiveness and sorrow—the quarrel was over.

But it had been a bad one—a very nasty one indeed—and the twins made up their minds to avoid another like it.

Now it was a strange thing, but at this time both boys began saving up their money. Every penny and halfpenny they received went into their money-boxes.

Jackie was so intent on hoarding up all his money that he failed to notice Hughie was doing just the same; and Hughie was so intent on his savings that he failed to notice what Jackie was doing.

Nobody ever thought of giving one brother any money without giving the same to the other.

So, exactly to a farthing, the twins had the same amount on a certain day a few weeks after the quarrel.

Hughie crept up to his mother, and whispered a secret in her ear. A little while later Jackie came and murmured something very private to his mother. And both gave her a little packet.

Mamma smiled and went out; and when she was alone in the street, she smiled more than ever. But she never told secrets, so no one knew why she laughed.

When she came home she had two parcels in her arms, and she went into her bedroom to take off her outdoor things.

Soon came a little tap at the door, followed by a curly head and two great, round blue eyes.

"Have you got it, mummie?" whispered Jackie.

"Yes, dear; here it is," answered mamma. Jackie took the parcel, and was just kissing his thanks to his mother, when there was another tap at the door and Hughie appeared.

He started when he saw his brother, and mamma turned away to hide her laughter. Then he, seeing a parcel on the bed, cried—

"You've got it, mummie dear; so I'll give it now."

He picked up the parcel and ran with it in his arms to Jackie; but there was Jackie running to him with a parcel exactly the same in his arms.

In each parcel there was a little black negro doll. Both had saved up to buy each other a new one; and now, how they laughed!

Mamma joined in, and they all laughed together. But they were very happy, for, as Hughie said—

"Now we've bof got a doll."

"Yes, and they've got the same curls and evvyfing," added Jackie. "I'm glad we've bof got the same."

"So am I," murmured Hughie: and they trotted happily off to the nursery, to play with their new dolls "bof so 'zactly the same."

WHY EDITORS SAY "WE."—The editor of a leading daily, discussing this question, recently remarked—

"Editors do not always say 'we,' but generally do so for a good reason. A newspaper that is worth its salt, in commenting on public matters, does not merely express the opinion of the individual writer of the day, but more frequently the average opinion of the editor (perhaps also proprietor), and other members of the staff of the paper.

"Take any leading morning paper in a big city to-day. It would be found on inquiry that one writer writes on one subject, another on another subject, and so on, to eight, ten, twelve, or fifteen, as the case may be.

"The individual writer on any particular subject partially merges himself into the corporate character of the journal, and more or less harmonizes himself with its general bent or proclivity.

"It is, consequently, more correct, as it is found more convenient, that a writer should say 'we' and not 'I,' because he is giving utterance to the opinion of more than one person.

"When, therefore, any paper editorially uses 'I' in its leading articles, instead of 'we,' it may be taken for granted that there is only one writer on the paper, or one writer who wishes to strut about in borrowed plumes.

"If there is only one writer, the paper must be intellectually impoverished and comparatively valueless; if there is more than one writer the editorial 'I' is as egotistic as it is misleading."

ALL OVER THE LAND.—China is called one vast cemetery. The face of the whole country is dotted with grass-covered hummocks—in the rice fields, open lots, and wayside inclosures. No farm is so small that it cannot afford one, and no hill too high.

Near Soochow the graves are brick affairs, round-topped and square at the ends. Some have doorways, and look like bake ovens. They vary in size and shape.

Near Shanghai they are shapeless mounds of earth, 6 by 3 and 3 feet high. The coffins are either rude and plain, or else are covered with gilt, and resemble Egyptian mummy-caskets.

They are so well made that, thickly as they lie upon the face of China, they do not suggest their presence to any sense but that of sight.

The farmers bury their dead in their rice fields, or among their mulberry trees, and the poor buy or lease ground from their neighbors.

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

Female druggists are becoming common in Holland.

The longest suspension bridge is the Brooklyn, 5,989 ft.

Chinese streets are not often more than eight feet wide.

Pens are polished with emery powder in a large revolving drum.

The natives of India believe that elephants have a religion and form of worship.

In ancient Egypt, the sun and fertile power generally were represented by a beetle.

In France when a railroad train is more than ten minutes late the company is fined.

At the bottom of the deep seas the water is only a few degrees above freezing point.

The number of persons to the square mile in England is placed at 480; in the United States at 17.

It is considered unlucky in Ireland to view a funeral procession while the beholder is under an umbrella.

Yarn made of wood is getting into the market. It is smooth, flexible, elastic and otherwise much like fibre yarns.

The cellar of the Bank of France resembles a large warehouse. Silver coin is stored there in 800 large barrels.

The best paid official in the British service is the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, who draws $100,000 a year for his services.

Whatever number of orders, no beer ever leaves the best German breweries until it has been standing for at least three months.

Young doves and pigeons are fed with a sort of pap secreted by the parent bird. It is necessary to their existence. They die without it.

On the Himalaya Mountains fields of barley are cultivated and brought to perfection at eleven thousand five hundred feet above the sea.

The feminine element is terribly in excess in Germany, the women exceeding the men by more than 1,000,000, according to the latest statistics.

The offensive weapon of the ostrich is his leg. He can kick as hard as a mule, and it is a remarkable fact that his kick is forward, never backward.

A physician declares that the common habit among women of biting off the thread with which they are sewing is prolific of blood poisoning.

The banana is said to be the most prolific of all food products, being forty-four times more productive than potatoes and 181 times more than wheat.

Next year will occur the centenary of that graceless piece of headgear commonly called the "stove pipe" hat, which first came into common use in Paris in 1797.

Mahogany sells at Minatitlan, Vera Cruz, at from $35 to $45 a ton for large timber, and one large dealer there sells 1000 tons a year to New York and European buyers.

From June, 1791, to November, 1813, the French Government enrolled 4,556,000 men, nearly three-fourths of whom died in battle, of wounds or of diseases contracted in the field.

An advertisement is now appearing of "galvanic belts for dogs." By the means of these electric zones all the dog family, from the "toy" to the St. Bernard, may be cured of weak backs, sprains, paralysis, and many other ills.

An uneducated dog at Louisville almost frustrated justice by allowing a burglar to get out of the yard with a bundle of plunder and attaching himself to the trousers of a policeman who essayed to jump the fence in pursuit.

The pressure of water to the square inch upon the body of every animal that lives at the bottom of the deepest parts of the Atlantic Ocean is about twenty-five times greater than the pressure that will drive a railroad train.

Handel's organ, given by the composer to the London Foundling Hospital in 1750, is being renovated. Handel played on it himself at the dedication, when the crush was so great that gentlemen were requested "to come without their swords and ladies without their hoops."

The distinction among animals of requiring the least sleep belongs to the elephant. In spite of its capacity for hard work, the animal seldom, if ever, sleeps more than four, or occasionally five hours. For two hours before midnight, and again for two hours after one o'clock, these mis-born mountains sleep.

A light that no attendant ever visits surmounts a beacon on Armish rock, in the Hebrides, Scotland. This remarkable light, which nightly shines for the benefit of fishermen far and near, is projected from a lighthouse on Lewis island, about 500 feet away, the rays being thrown on a mirror in the lantern of Armish rock, and by that being reflected to an arrangement of prisms that scatters them in the necessary directions.

INDIAN SUMMER.

It is the season when the light of dreams
  Around the year in golden glory lies,
  The heavens are full of floating mysteries,
And in the lake the veiled splendor gleams!
  Like hidden poets lie the lazy streams,
Mantled with mysteries of their own romance.
While scarce a breath disturbs their drowsy trance.
  The yellow leaf which down the soft air gleams,
Glides, wavers, falls, and skims the unruffled lake.
  Here the frail maples and the faithful firs
By twisted vines are wed. The russet brake
  Skirts the low pool; and starred with open burs
  The chestnut stands—But when the north wind stirs,
How, like an armed host, the summoned scene shall wake!

LIFE IN OLD INNS.

It would be interesting to know who was the first person to keep an English inn. The word itself is Anglo-Saxon, signifying a lodging-house; another term was "gest hus," a house for guests, or "cumena hus," a house of comers. Near the high-roads, a few scattered inns were established, where travelers could obtain a night's shelter.

Edward the Confessor ordained that if a man lay three nights at the same inn, he was to be styled a third-night-awn-hinde; and the landlord was answerable for him, exactly as if he were one of the servants. A good many alehouses seem to have been dotted about Saxon England.

Efforts were continually being made to keep down the number of inns. In the reign of Edward I., there were only three in the whole of London. Even in 1552, no more than forty were legally permitted in the metropolis—York might have eight; Norwich, Exeter and Cambridge, four; Bristol, six, and Oxford, three.

These regulations must have been set at naught in a very wholesale manner; for half a century later, there were four hundred "houses of call" in that part of London known as the City; and no fewer than twenty-four clustered round Covent Garden. In mediæval Oxford, it was ruled that no "victualler" was eligible for the office of Mayor, and this term included an innkeeper.

The inns of the Middle Ages were furnished in a homely style. We know from an old inventory what the famous George Inn at Salisbury was like in the fifteenth century. This house possessed thirteen guest chambers, each with three beds in it, a table on trestles, and some oaken benches. People ate and slept in the same apartment indiscriminately. The thirteen rooms were named the Principal Chamber, the Earl's Chamber, the pantry adjoining, the Oxford Chamber, the Abingdon, the Squire's, the Lombard's, the George, the Clarendon, the Understent, the Fitzwaryn, the London, and the Garret. At this period titled persons slept on a bed, commoners on a mattress; a curious distinction.

In French and German mediæval inns, a humorous custom prevailed for the punishment of those convicted of drawing the "long bow." A wooden knife was placed by the side of the president of the table, whose duty and privilege it was to put boasters to silence, by ringing the bell in the blade, or blowing a whistle concealed in the handle. He then, amid the laughter of the company, handed the knife to the offender, to keep until a greater boaster than himself could be found.

A curious provision was introduced into the Scotch parliament in 1425, owing the complaints of the inn-keepers that travelers stayed with friends when they came to a town. It was enacted that these henceforth, whether on foot or horseback, should repair to the established hostelry of the place; and that any burgess who took them into his own house should be fined forty shillings. Nobles and gentlemen might stay where they pleased, provided they sent their horses and attendants to the inn.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the inns of Paris and London were at the height of their prosperity. They were the general meeting-places of the wits and literary men of the day; and even the noblemen used them.

The Duke of Montague gave a dinner at the "Devil;" and the great Elizabeth herself, so says tradition, did not disdain, upon one occasion, to eat pork and peas at the "King's Head" in Fenchurch Street. An ancient metal dish with a cover is still exhibited there, as the identical one used.

In her reign, it appears that the taverns were great receivers of stolen venison. The Lord Mayor wrote to Elizabeth's secretary in 1585, informing him that he had taken bonds of all the cooks in London not to buy or sell any venison to bake, without keeping a note of the name of the seller. The penalty, forty pounds, seems an enormous one.

Dr. Johnson had the highest appreciation of an inn. "There is nothing," he remarks, "which has yet been contrived by man, by which so much happiness is produced, as by a good tavern."

The burly doctor loved to take his ease at his inn, or rather at his two inns—for his name is intimately associated with both the "Mitre" and the "Cheshire Cheese." The former dated from Shakespeare's time, and was pulled down in 1829; the latter still exists in much the same condition as when the author of "Rasselas" trod its sanded floor, and smoked his clay pipe, with the admiring Boswell close at hand.

A small social circle used formerly to meet at the "Cheshire Cheese" every Saturday night; and as the clock finished striking nine, the chairman rapped on the table, and gave the following toast: "All ships at sea; sweethearts and wives; not forgetting the trunk-maker's daughter at the corner of St. Paul's." The last part of the toast referred to a very fascinating damsel, whose father kept a stall beneath the shadow of the great cathedral.

Most of the famous old literary taverns of London are now merely a matter of history. The rooms were small and low, the seats only wooden benches; but they were good enough for the giants of former days, who found within their homely walls the social intercourse they craved for.

The guests drank out of pewter pots, and their table manners might not have been all that one could wish, but some of them have left names that will not be forgotten for all time.

The inns were the club-houses of the time, and whatever may have been their disadvantages, there was a degree of coziness and cheerfulness about them which is lacking in many a modern one of far greater pretensions.

Men frequented the same inn day after day, and year after year, and mine host was a personal friend of many of his customers.

Grains of Gold.

Kindness gives birth to kindness.

The bread of others is sweet.

A guilty conscience needs no accuser.

A burden which one chooses is not felt.

After the fight, there are lots of brave men.

Words are not arrows, but they fly farther.

Sorrow is a stone that crushes a single bearer to the ground, whilst two are able to carry it with ease.

Four things come not back; the spoken word, the sped arrow, the past life, and the neglected opportunity.

He who has a thousand friends, has not one friend to spare, and he who has one enemy, shall meet him everywhere!

There is no better test of friendship than the ready turning of the mind to the little concerns of a friend when preoccupied with important concerns of our own.

Common sense in one view is the most uncommon sense. While it is extremely rare in possession, the recognition of it is universal. All men admire it, though few have it.

Femininities.

Better than a case at law—A case of champagne.

The Chinese do not permit women to be photographed.

A new kind of waterproof dress-goods is being manufactured in France out of the feathers of geese, ducks and hens, treated in a peculiar manner.

Lady, in a bric-a-brac store: Let me see something handsome, but cheap.
Clerk: Yes'm; something for a wedding present?

The first royal personage who actually possessed a fork was Queen Elizabeth. The novelty was so curious that she seems to have used the article only on special occasion.

"Yes, in some respects my wife is much like that lightning change artist."
"Why?"
"Oh, I have known her to change her mind six times in one minute."

An up-to-date dining-table decoration is an electrically illuminated jelly. Small incandescent lamps are buried inside the differently colored jellies, and the result is said to be very effective.

Burglars recently entered the house of the Chief of Police of New Rochelle, N. Y., and stole five bicycles. Well, since everybody is "bicycle mad," burglars can hardly be blamed for taking up the wheel.

"Eternal vigilance," shouted the orator, "is the price of liberty!" The women electors exchanged glances. "That is the same price as last year," they remarked, and shrugged their shoulders.

"Here is a case of a man who kissed his wife and dropped dead," said Higgins.
"I suppose the shock killed him," remarked Mrs. Higgins, sarcastically. "Most married men are unaccustomed to such a thing."

The Queen-Regent of Spain is a confirmed smoker of cigarettes, and when at work is seldom without one between her lips or in a box near at hand. "Carmen Sylva," the accomplished Queen of Roumania, is also an ardent smoker.

A suggestion recently made was that of a French commercial traveler, who proposed that women's bicycles should be subjected to a yearly tax of $80 and that nobody should be permitted to wear rational costume without taking out an annual license at a cost of $200.

A Court in Peru, Ind., has decided that men of over seventy years have no business "making up" to young women unless they mean matrimony. As a matter of equity the Court might have gone farther and declared that young women have no business committing matrimony with men of over 70.

Pigheadedness was shown in a recent block of thirty hours on the Grand Junction Canal in Northamptonshire. The captains of two barges arriving at a small lock from opposite directions, each insisting on going through first. Over a hundred canal boats were kept waiting till one of the men gave way by order of the proprietor of his boat.

Housewives in Florida scrub their floors with oranges. In almost any town in the orange-growing districts women may be seen using fruit exactly as we use soap. They cut the oranges in halves, and rub the flat exposed pulp upon the floor. The acid in the oranges does the cleansing, and does it well, for the boards are as white as snow after the application.

It is said that Irish girls have the best eyes, keenest wit, brightest complexion, and the most beautiful hands of all the women in the world, the hands of American girls being declared too narrow and too long, those of English girls too plump, German girls' hands too broad and fat, whilst the Spanish feminine hand is the least graceful of all. The latter is remarkable, as the physical grace of the Spanish women is historical.

In Alaska a married woman, instead of endeavoring to conceal her age, is so proud of it that she wears a sign of her years upon her lip. A piece of bone or wood is thrust through the lower lip, its size indicating the wearer's age. When a girl is married a piece of wood or bone about the size of a pen is inserted in her lower lip, the size being increased as she grows older. Naturally Alaskan women present a most unsightly appearance.

Some of the London papers assert that the Duchess of Marlborough has not succeeded in making herself popular in English society; but she is winning golden opinions among the villagers around Blenheim. She goes regularly to the village church, takes an interest in all the local games and sports, and, clad as simply as a schoolgirl, visits the old and infirm, the sick and the poor, and plays the part of Lady Bountiful as if to the manner born.

Only one woman's name appears in the list of thirteen artists who are competing for the prize promised by the German Emperor for the restoration of the statue of a dancing maenad, of which the head, arms, and part of the back are lacking. This is Miss Elizabeth Ney, a native of Munster, in Westphalia. She has placed a branch of vine in the hands of her model, which being flung backwards during the dance hides the missing portion of the back.

Masculinities.

In Denmark an "old maids" insurance company pays regular weekly benefits.

In London there are 2127 feather curlers alone, 4507 artificial flower makers, 4075 umbrella and walking-stick makers.

A clergyman at Cradock, Cape Colony, advertises in the local paper that he is prepared to undertake the tuning of pianofortes and to give pianoforte lessons.

In 1845 pneumatic springs were proposed to increase the comfort of carriages, and it was then that the idea of pneumatic tires presented itself to William Thompson, C. E., of London.

It is a sanitary recommendation that in all basins and tubs, especially those connecting with or near the sleeping apartments, the opening into the waste pipe at night should be stopped and fresh water left standing in the basin.

Mrs. Spooner: Charles, do you think you would ever marry again? Mr. Spooner: What, after having lived with you for ten years! Never! (Mrs. Spooner says she would give something handsome if she only knew just what he meant by that.)

Oddities and singularities of behavior may attend genius; but when they do they are its misfortunes and its blemishes. The man of true genius will be ashamed of them; at least he will never affect to distinguish himself by whimsical peculiarities.

A tramp came tumbling out of a store, stood on his ear a moment, and then collapsed in a heap. "Hello!" cried a bystander. "What's the matter?" "Excuse me, pard," said the vagrant; "I just went in there and asked that feller to help me out."

Mrs. Western: Did you meet the Rushmores at the seaside this summer? Mrs. Gotham: Yes; they were at the same hotel we were. Mrs. Western: They are one of our first families. Mrs. Gotham: Yes; I noticed they were always the first at table.

Hundreds of millers flying about the electric power of the Pendleton, Ore., Light Company, entered the building through an open window one night, and being drawn by suction under a belt leading to the big dynamo, stopped the machinery and put out all the lights in town.

After smoking tobacco fifty years or more, Mrs. Hannah Chard, a famous Gloucester county centenarian, has thrown away her pipe, with the determination never to smoke again. Although she is 107 years old, she has been convinced lately that the use of tobacco was shortening her life.

A Frenchman's pipe recently saved him from disfigurement. He was attacked by a discharged waiter who threw a bottle of vitriol at his face. The bottle broke on the pipe he was smoking, sending the greater part of its contents into the face of his assailant, who was terribly burned.

According to report, John Bull contemplates abandoning his favorite ale mug for the glass of absinthe. So popular is this latter drink becoming in England that a league is being formed for the express purpose of checking the consumption of "French poison, which drives more people into the insane asylum than any other form of stimulant."

Carrying a coil of wire, a New Orleans woman boarded an electric car and laid the wire down on the platform. Through some bolt connection with the motor apparatus or by induction the wire became charged with electricity, and when she took it up to leave the car she was knocked down by the shock she received.

An English writer says there is cruelty in the keeping of gold fish. Half of such captives die from sheer want of rest. As fish have eyes so formed that they cannot endure the light, in a glass vessel they are in an entirely wrong place, as is evident from the way in which they dash about, and go round and round, until fairly worn out.

A new Parisian institution, which is pretty sure to be copied in all civilized countries, is an alibi office. The concern undertakes to post letters for customers from any point of the world, and render other little services tending to indicate the client's presence at a certain point while he—of course, only married men would be the office's patrons—is otherwise engaged elsewhere.

It is announced that President Faure is dissatisfied with the official evening dress of the Chief Executive of France. Accordingly, he has adopted the costume worn by Napoleon I. in Greuze's portrait—a black velvet coat embroidered with gold thread, a waistcoat with broad lapels, top boots, a belt with a gold-hilted sword, and a hat with tricolored feathers. The broad red sash of the Legion of Honor will be worn diagonally across the coat.

The specialization of industry which characterizes the East more and more each year, does not, as yet, mark the West, where diversity of accomplishment commends the individual to fortune. A farrier at Oklahoma City announces that he shoes mules and repairs parasols and gasoline stoves, and on a noted Southwestern tourist's train this season only men who can sing or play will be employed as waiters. After meals they are to entertain passengers at free concerts.

Humorous.

HOLLOW SHAMS.

Go where you will, seek where you may,
Yet it will always follow
That loudest noises ever come
From vessels that are hollow.

And, so with men, it is the same;
He that is always blowing
Would, if good sense were measured, make
The very poorest showing.

Standing fire—Making a present of coal.

People all wool—Those who shrink at nothing.

An inevitable certainty of catching a cold—Being asked to sing.

What State is high in the middle and round at both ends?—O-hi-o.

Why are yacht-owners so intemperate in their remarks about races?—Because they frequently quarrel over their cups.

Brown: How often have I told you not to play in this house!

Johnny: Every time you've caught me at it.

A child, on seeing a bill on a telegraph post, exclaimed:

"Oh, mamma, look! A message has fallen down!"

A young lady at Niagara was heard to say, "What an elegant trimming that rainbow would make for a white lace over dress!" Quite a poetical idea.

M'P.: I got this type-writing machine on trial, but I'm goin' to take it back.

M'N.: What for?

M'P.: It don't spell correctly.

She: Why don't you pick out some nice girl in your set and marry her?

He: Humph! You don't know the girls in our set. They do the picking out!

"That cat made an awful noise in the back garden last night."

"Yes, father. I suppose that, since he ate the canary, he thinks he can sing."

Husband: I suppose you'll be asleep when I come home?

Wife: You mean you suppose you'll come home when I'm asleep."

Junior partner: Why did you give Crummer the job of collecting debts for our firm? Do you think he is any good?

Senior partner: Well, he collected a debt from me one day!

"Do you know," said the man who was going to have a tooth pulled, "I don't think 'dental parlor' is a good phrase."

"No?"

"Drawing-room would be much better."

A little girl of four years old was recently called as a witness in the police court, and, in answer to the question as to what became of little girls who told lies, she innocently replied that they were sent to bed.

"Is anybody waiting on you?" said a shopwalker at a draper's to a girl from the country.

"Yes, sir," said the blushing damsel, "that's my young man outside. He wouldn't come in."

A cab driver who had been paid in multitudinous small coins, amounting in all to his legal fare, remarked to the recent occupier of his vehicle:

"You've been a-saving up for this treat, you 'ave!"

Agriculturist, to season ticket holder in train: You don't have no ticket?

Season ticket holder: No; I travel on my good looks.

Agriculturist: Then probably you ain't goin' very far.

"Would you oblige," said an interviewer, "by telling me what book has helped you most in life?"

After a thoughtful pause, the great man answered:

"My bank book."

"Did any one call, Jane, while I was out?"

"Yes, ma'am; Mr. Barkis."

"Mr. Barkis? I don't know any one of the name."

"I know him, ma'am; it was me that he came to see."

B.: Let me shake your hand, dear boy; this is one of the happy days of your life!

A.: You're too previous, old man. I'm not to be married until to-morrow.

B.: That's what I say. This is one of the happy days of your life.

"I will follow you to the uttermost ends of the earth!" hissed the villain.

"No—you won't," remarked the heroine calmly.

"Why won't I?" queried the villain, aghast at her coolness.

"Because I'm not going there," she replied.

A certain German professor of music to be met with in English drawing-rooms is an entertaining old gentleman. To him recently a lady said, when one of his compositions had just been rendered by one of the guests:

"How did you like the rendering of your song, professor?"

"Vas dot my song?" replied the professor. "I did not know him."

GIFTS TO ORDER.

"Take you into my confidence concerning my experience of reporting fashionable weddings? Well, I certainly could give you one or two out-of-the-way particulars. And as I need not tell you who the people are of whom I am speaking no harm can come of my granting your request."

The speaker was a lady journalist of great ability. Hearing that, in view of her own approaching marriage, she had resigned her post, the writer sought a little chat on the subject referred to above.

"People not behind the scenes," continued the lady, "cannot even imagine what a really tremendous event a wedding in high life is. I have known preparations to be in active progress for a whole year. And for the manufacture of some of the presents six months is very commonly required.

"In most cases I had not to attend to inspect the wedding presents until the actual morning of the ceremony, or perhaps the day before it.

"But on extra important occasions I would now and again be called upon to visit some house of business where a particularly fine present was being made, and to write a paragraph about it for the paper.

"Such notices were, of course, paid for and large sums were often spent in this way long before the wedding itself took place.

"Amongst the various 'sets' in society, and even between the different branches of a single family, very keen rivalry exists in the matter of wedding presents and display generally.

"In one case, where two cousins were about to be married, the ceremonies were delayed from time to time right through the fashionable season, the ladies each manœuvring not to be first.

"The lady who eventually secured the later date, in her efforts to make a better display than her relative, so overdid the thing, however, than the ceremony became a ponderous and heavy affair, and triumph rested with Bride No 1.

"Where I had previously attended the wedding of a relative, the question was often put to me, 'How many presents did she have?' Perhaps I would answer, 'Forty,' though quite frequently the gifts in really distinguished families will total up to four or five hundred or more.

"Hearing the number mentioned, I have known the mother of the bride to say 'Forty! Well we must have fifty.' And, as I afterwards discovered, this ingenious lady, calling on long neglected friends and relatives, cordially invited them to the wedding, knowing that those who came must bring presents.

"A list of the aristocratic personages they would rub shoulders with was also held out as a tempting bait. Finding at the last moment that the catalogue of presents was still short, the lady herself purchased a dozen or more tea-urns, silver nutcrackers, liqueur stands, carriage clocks, and so on, and sent them to her daughter in the names of unrepresented friends.

"To those who were surprised to see their names in this way introduced into the report of the wedding the mother explained innocently, 'You see, I gave it to Emmie in your name in case it should spoil her happiness to think that you had forgotten her.'"

Here the lady journalist smiled. She was about to make an especially interesting confession.

"Once, two days before a wedding took place, I received a visit from the bride's mother. 'I want to speak very candidly to you,' said she, 'and ask your aid. You know we move in a brilliant set. This wedding must be a great success.

"'Unfortunately my daughter has a sharp tongue, and I cannot flatter myself that she is popular. The presents that have as yet come in are disappointing. But they shall not make a meagre show. I propose myself to supply the deficiency.'

"With my assistance she did. She prepared a list of things that she could ultimately use in her own establishment, and I went out and purchased them.

"Over five hundred dollars was spent in this way. At one establishment where I had admired an expensive pendant the proprietor artfully remarked, 'If you liked to borrow it to put among the presents I could let you have it for two or three days for a moderate hiring fee.'

"That settled the whole question. We hired eight pieces of elaborate jewelry from him, giving him reasonable security. And I wrote various little tickets to put on the presents supposed to come from schoolmates, disappointed suitors and admirers generally, disguising my handwriting by scribbling backwards, uprightly or sloping, with fine pens, broad pens, quill pens, and even pencils.

"To show you that this is no isolated instance, let me tell you of another. Amongst the numerous and costly gifts, at a wedding was a beautiful little white piano, with hand painted panels.

"'A present from a very old friend,' it was explained. Two days after the wedding, on the eve of going to press, I found I had no portrait of the bride. I rushed off to the house.

"All her pictures had been given away: but her people furnished me with the address of a lady who would lend me a photograph. When I called at the house there was a cart at the door and the whole place in commotion.

"'Sorry we are so topsy-turvey at the moment,' apologized the lady when she came to me, 'but they are just bringing back our piano, which has been away for repairs.'

"Just then the men took the covering off the instrument. At once I recognized it as the present from the very old friend."

EDUCATION.—Every year witnesses improvements, both in the methods and practice of education; yet it may be that in the multiplicity of the various branches, and the necessary efforts to master more complex systems, some of the underlying necessities of every-day life may be passed over too lightly. That education consists more in drawing out the untried faculties than in any amount of knowledge put into the mind and the memory has become almost a truism. Yet the actual realization of it in every hour of teaching is not yet an accomplished fact. The truth is that, in every subject introduced for the culture of the young, there is an under-current of personal thought and action, most necessary to arouse and preserve. While this is kept alive and active, education is going on; when it becomes lifeless and torpid, no amount of instruction, however well planned and imparted, will be real and of value.

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Ripans Tabules are pleasant to take, safe, effectual, and give immediate relief. Sold by druggists.

SALESMEN WANTED—$100 to $125 per month and expenses. Staple line; position permanent, pleasant and desirable. Address, with stamp, KING MFG. Co., T 137, Chicago.

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1223 CHESTNUT ST. Philadelphia, Premier Artistes IN HAIR.

Inventors of the CELEBRATED SO EASIER VENTILATING WIG, ELASTIC BAND TOUPEE, and Manufacturers of Every Description of Ornamental Hair for Ladies and Gentlemen.

Instructions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to measure their own heads with accuracy:

TOUPEES AND SCALPS. INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.
No. 2. From forehead back as far as bald.
No. 3. Over forehead as far as required.
No. 4. Over the crown of the head.

FOR WIGS, INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.
No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck, No. 1.
No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.
No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.

They have always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

Dollard's Herbanium Extract for the Hair.

This preparation has been manufactured and sold at Dollard's for the past fifty years, and its merits are such that, while it has never yet been advertised, the demand for it keeps steadily increasing.

Also DOLLARD'S REGENERATIVE CREAM to be used in conjunction with the Herbanium when the Hair is naturally dry and needs an oil.

Mrs. Edmondson Gorter writes to Messrs. Dollard & Co., to send her a bottle of their Herbanium Extract for the Hair. Mrs. Gorter has tried in vain to obtain anything equal to it as a dressing for the hair in England.

MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER.
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov., 23, '96. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

NAVY PAY OFFICE, PHILADELPHIA.

I have used "Dollard's Herbanium Extract, of Vegetable Hair Wash," regularly for upwards of five years with great advantage. My hair, from rapidly thinning, was early restored, and has been kept by it in its wonted thickness and strength. It is the best wash I have ever used.

A. W. RUSSELL, U. S. N.

TO MRS. RICHARD DOLLARD, 1223 Chestnut st., Phila.

I have frequently, during a number of years, used the "Dollard's Herbanium Extract," and I do no know of any which equals it as a pleasant, refreshing and healthful cleanser of the hair.

Very respectfully,
LEONARD MYERS,
Ex-Member of Congress, 5th District.

Prepared only and for sale, Wholesale and retail, and applied professionally by

DOLLARD & CO.
1223 CHESTNUT STREET.

GENTLEMEN'S HAIR CUTTING AND SHAVING LADIES' AND CHILDREN'S HAIR CUTTING.
None but Practical Male and Female Artists Employed.

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Black Diamond Express	Week-days.		
For Buffalo, (Parlor Car)		12.30 p m	
Buffalo and Chicago Exp.	daily.	8.34 p m	
Sleeping Cars,		9.45 p m	

Williamsport Express, week-days, 3.35, 10.05 a m, 4.05 p m. Daily (Sleeper) 11.30 p m.

Lock Haven, Clearfield and Bellefonte Express (Sleeper daily, except Saturday, 11.30 p m.

FOR NEW YORK.

Leave Reading Terminal, 4.10, 7.30, (two-hour train), 8.30, 9.30, 10.30, 11.00 a m, 12.45, (dining car), 1.30, 3.05, 4.00, 4.02, 5.00, 6.10, 8.10 (dining car) p m, 12.10 night. Sundays—4.10, 5.30, 9.30, 10.10, 11.30 (dining car) a m, 1.30, 3.55, 6.10, 8.10 (dining car) p m, 12.1 night.

Leave 24th and Chestnut Sts., 3.55, 7.59, 10.00, 10.32, 11.04, a m, 12.57 (Dining car), 3.06, 4.10, 6.12, 8.19 (dining car), 11.45 p m. Sunday 3.55, 10.32, a m, 12.14, (dining car), 4.10, 8.12, 8.19, (dining car), 11.45 p m.

Leave New York, foot of Liberty street, 4.30, 8.00, 8.15 9.00, 10.00, 11.30 a m, 1.30, 2.00, 3.30, 4.00 (two-hour train), 4.30 (two-hour train), 5.00, 6.00, 7.30, 9.00 p m, 12.15 night. Sundays—4.30 9.00, 10.00, 11.30, a m, 2.00, 4.00, 5.00, 6.00 p m, 12.15 night.

Parlor cars on all day express trains and sleeping cars on all night trains to and from New York.

FOR BETHLEHEM, EASTON AND POINTS IN LEHIGH AND WYOMING VALLEYS, 6.05, 8.00, 9.00, 11.00 a m, 12.30, 3.00, 4.30, 5.30, 6.34, 9.45 p m. Sundays—6.34, 8.32, 9.00 a m, 1.10, 4.30, 6.34, 9.45 p m. (9.45 p m, does not connect for Easton on Sunday.)

FOR SCHUYLKILL VALLEY POINTS.

For Phœnixville and Pottstown—Express, 8.35, 10.05 a m, 12.45, (Saturdays only 2.30), 4.05, 6.30, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.20, 7.45, 11.06 a m, 1.42, 4.35, 5.53, 7.20 p m. Sundays—Express, 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 7.30, 11.35 a m, 6.15, p m.

For Reading—Express, 8.35, 10.05 a m, 12.45, (Saturdays only 2.30), 4.05, 6.30, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.20, 7.45 a m, 1.42, 4.35, 5.53 7.20 p m. Sunday—Express 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 7.20 a m, 6.15 p m.

For Lebanon and Harrisburg—Express, 8.35, 10.05 a m, (Saturdays only 2.30), 4.05, 6.30 p m. Accom., 4.20 a m, 1.42, 7.20 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00, 7.20 a m. Accom., 6.15.

For Pottsville—Express, 8.35, 10.05 a m, Saturdays only 2.30, 4.05, 6.30, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.20, 7.45 a m, 1.42 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom. 6.30 p m.

For Shamokin and Williamsport—Express, 8.35, 10.05 a m, 4.05 11.30 p m. Sunday—Express, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Additional for Shamokin—Express, week-days, 6.30 p m. Accom., 4.20 a m. Sundays—Express, 4.00 a m.

For Danville and Bloomsburg, 10.05 a m.

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